



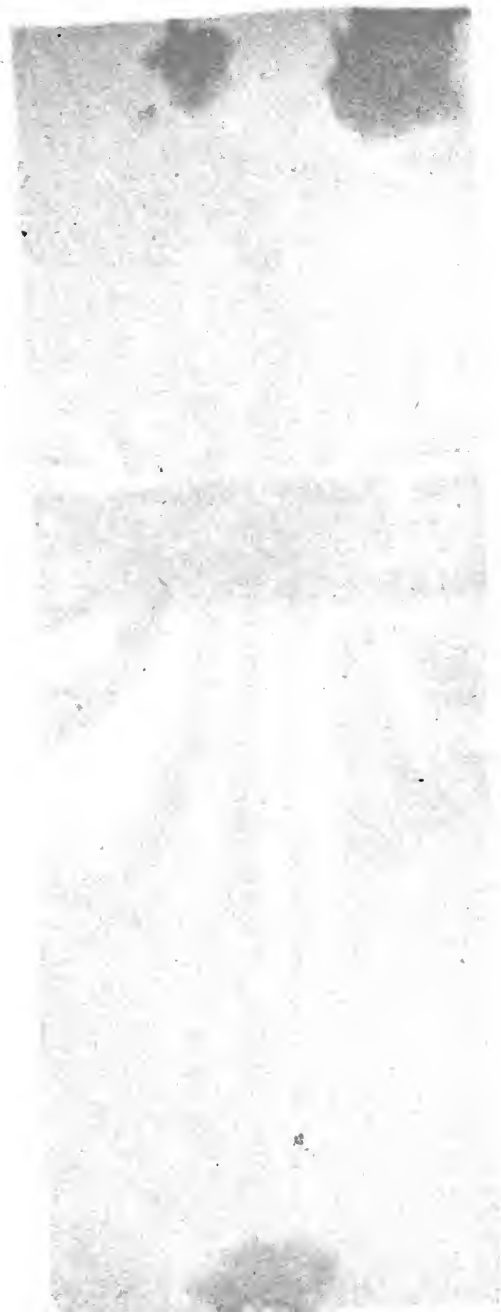


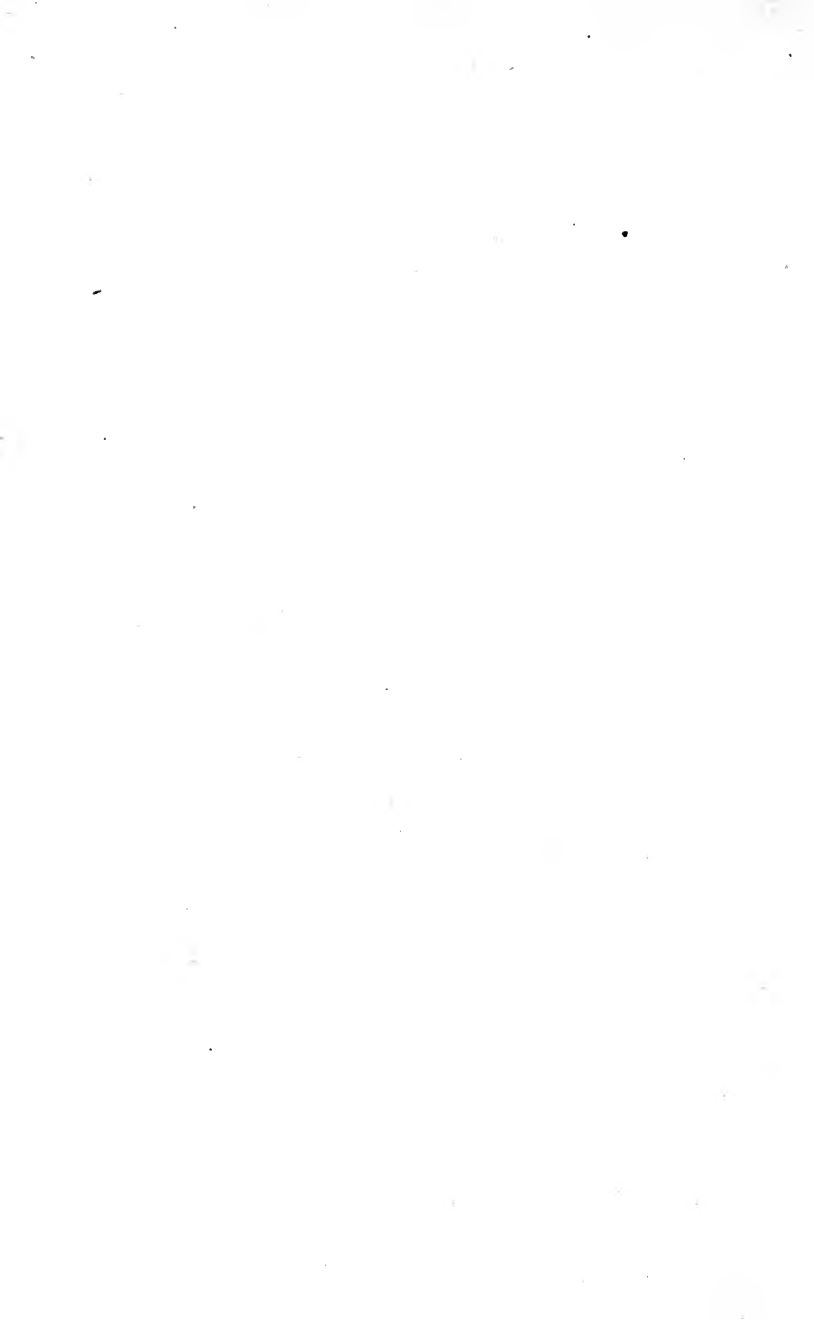
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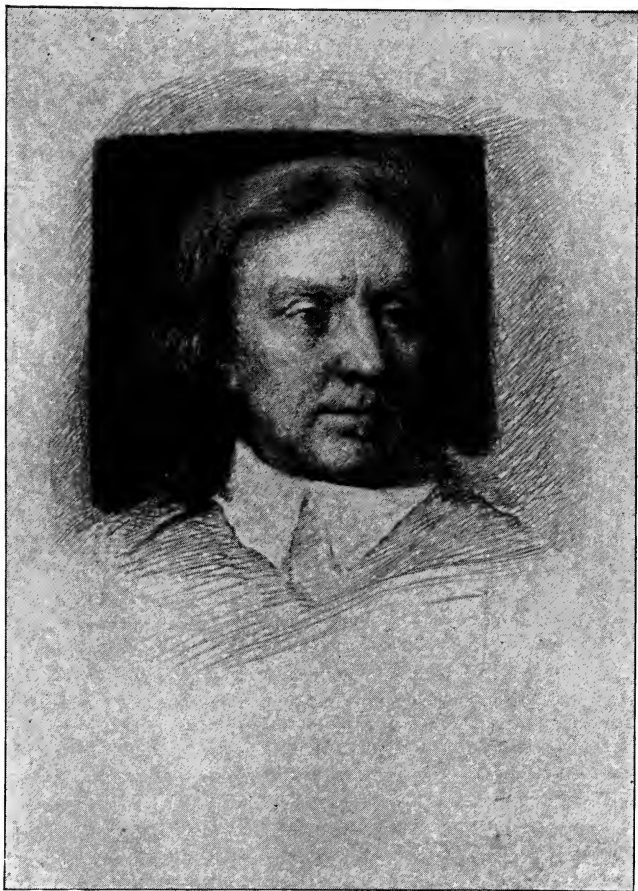




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OLIVER CROMWELL.

*(After C. A. Wallner's etching, published in London, 1881.)*

# OLIVER CROMWELL

BY GEORGE H. CLARK, D. D.  
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM  
OLD PAINTINGS AND PRINTS

It is the property of the hero, in every time, in every place,  
in every situation, that he comes back to reality; that he stands  
upon things, and not shows of things.— *Carlyle*.



BOSTON  
D. LOTHROP COMPANY  
1893

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LOAN STACK

GIFT

THE heroic soul, amidst its bliss or woe,  
Is never swell'd too high, nor sunk too low;  
Stands, like its origin above the skies,  
Ever the same great self, sedately wise;  
Collected and prepared in every stage  
To scorn a courting world, or bear its rage.

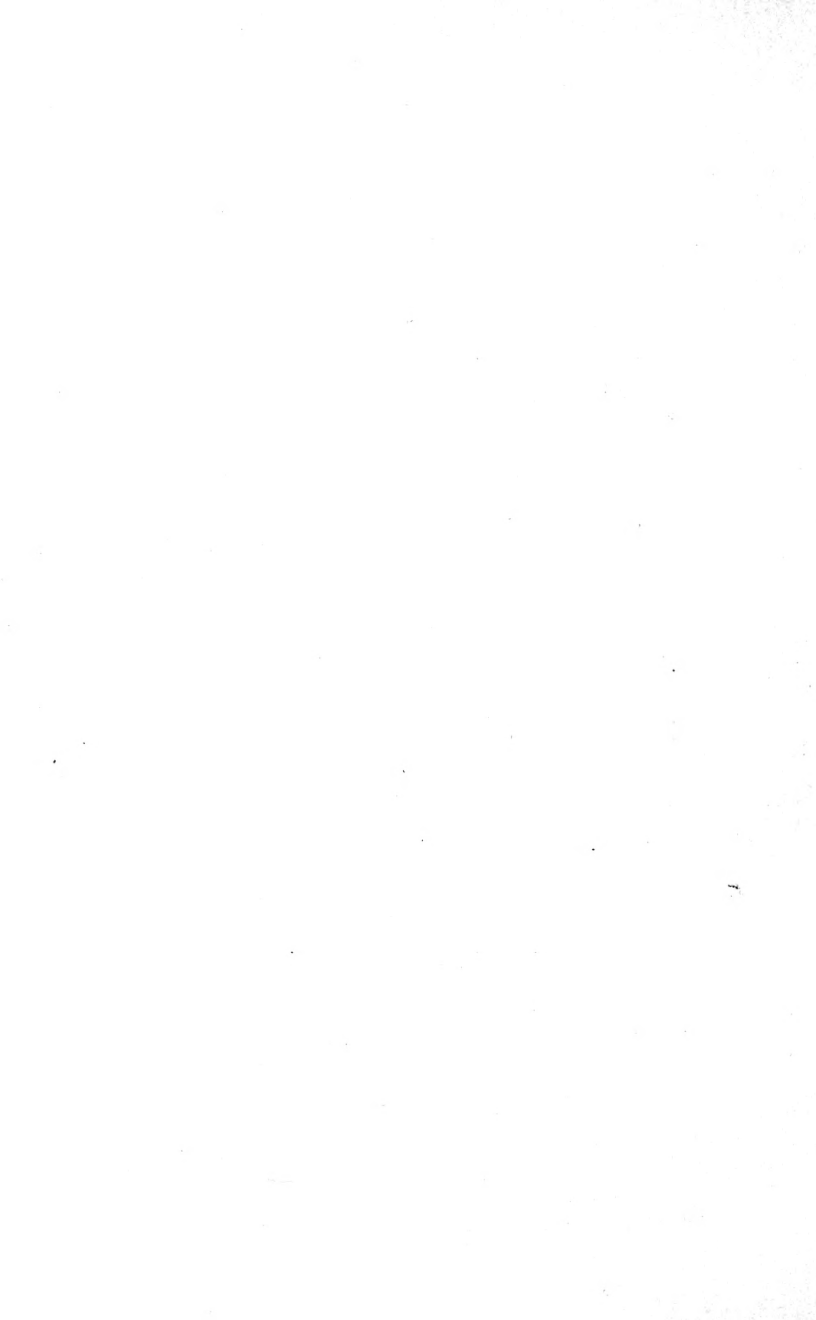
HENLEY.

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UNKNOWN to Cromwell as to me,  
Was Cromwell's measure or degree.

. . . . .  
He works, plots, fights, in rude affairs,  
With squires, lords, kings, his craft compares,  
Till late he learned, through doubt and fear,  
Broad England harbored not his peer.

EMERSON.





## PREFACE.

IF the historians, poets, novelists, biographers, essayists, reviewers and writers of school histories who wrote adversely to Oliver Cromwell between the years 1660 and 1860 were alive, the largest room in the British Museum Library would not hold them. For those who, between the years named, did partial justice to Oliver's memory a small alcove would suffice. In that alcove would be writers like Nathan Ben Saddi, who suggests that the Protector was both a "righteous man" and a "rogue;" and Smollet, who says that he was a "compound of villainy and virtue." Within those two hundred years Macaulay, with one exception, was the only great writer who justly measured and fairly described the Protector. The exception was Thomas Carlyle.

Carlyle, by five years of patient and impatient toil, has made it possible for such books as the present one to be written; and yet, while making much use of the "Letters and Speeches," I have made but little use of the elucidations of this great biographer.

In the library of Trinity College, Hartford, is a

## PREFACE.

remarkable collection of old folios relating to England's civil wars, in which may be found the Clarendon "Letters," the Clarendon "State Papers," the Thurloe "State Papers," Dugdale, Rushworth, Nalson, etc. These six works contain a large part of the material from which the histories of the Commonwealth and the Protectorate have been made. It is noteworthy that within the twenty thousand folio pages of these volumes there is not to be found one charge adverse to Cromwell which is supported by credible evidence. The vilification of the Protector, with the exception of a few allegations, the most important of which are refuted in the following pages, is limited to the nicknames with which he was branded : such names as "Catiline," "Tiberius," "Nero," "Domitian," "Devil," etc.

It was natural that royalists who had been excluded from English politics for many years, and who had been in exile and in poverty, should resort to calumny after Oliver was dead ; but it is strange that with a few false statements and the use of opprobrious titles, they should have succeeded in making the greatest and the purest ruler of his country the most infamous of all on the pages of modern history. With the help, however, of David Hume they have done so.

It is to be remarked that the only documents throwing light on Cromwell were published, or were in manuscript, prior to the year 1700. Parts of this old material, including Pepys's Diary, Mrs. Hutchinson's "Memoirs," and most of the "Letters

## PREFACE.

and Speeches," are recent acquisitions; but all writings of authority relating to the Protector were either in print or in manuscript by the year 1698, when Ludlow's "Memoirs" were published. Those who wrote after that date simply gave their opinions based on what they had read. This remark applies to all historians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

It should also be remembered that outside of newspapers and pamphlets published during the lifetime of Cromwell, the poetry of a few writers, the praise of Maidstone and of Milton, there was almost nothing produced for half a century that was not condemnatory. After the restoration of Charles II. the name and memory of the Protector rested chiefly on the attestations of royalist enemies; but not wholly, for two or three Republicans, incited by military or political disappointment, made the charge of duplicity.

Cromwell's best-known title, hypocrite, was so stamped on him, and so embodied in all kinds of English literature, that it was almost universally believed to be a just stigma, until the "Letters and Speeches" were produced by Carlyle in the year 1846. Since that date the real Cromwell, wise, true, pure, noble, has been recognized, and books wholly favorable to him have been written; but to a large minority, if not to the majority of readers, he is still the "bad man," the "artful politician" and the "atrocious conspirator" depicted by Clarendon and other historians.

## PREFACE.

"I hate Cromwell," said a friend to me. "Have you ever read his speeches and letters?" I asked. "No, I wish to hate him."

To the present writer, Oliver is the most interesting man who has ever had connection with the English Government; more competent judges have pronounced him the ablest ruler who has governed England.

My thanks are due to the Rev. Edward E. Hale, D. D.; to Mr. Frank B. Gay, of the Watkinson Library, Hartford; to Charles J. Hoadley, LL. D. State Librarian of Connecticut; to the Rev. Samuel Hart, D. D., Professor in Trinity College; to the Rev. George Williamson Smith, President of Trinity College; to my brother, the Rt. Rev. Thomas M. Clark, Bishop of Rhode Island, for courtesies rendered, and to the Rt. Rev. Phillips Brooks, Bishop of Massachusetts, who has kindly allowed pictures from his collection to be reproduced in this book.

GEORGE H. CLARK.

HARTFORD, CONN., *April* 29, 1892.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

The author and publishers desire to express their thanks to the following friends who have loaned valuable paintings and prints for reproduction in this book : Rt. Rev. Phillips Brooks, D. D., Boston Public Library, Harvard College, Rev. Edward Everett Hale, D. D., Mr. Philip L. Hale, and Mr. Justin Winsor, who have all helped forward most cordially the illustrations in this volume.



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# OLIVER CROMWELL.

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## CHAPTER I.

### DEFAMATORY WRITERS.

I PURPOSE to tell, in a plain and simple way, the story of a hero who was neglected by the Puritans and defamed by royalists from the time of the restoration of Charles II. down to near the present age. The neglect on the Puritans' part is explained by history; the malignity and falsehoods of writers devoted to the Stuarts requires no explanation. For nearly thirty years, from 1660 to 1688, no one in England dared to publish a history of the Protectorate; and after William III. came to the throne, though danger of imprisonment and death for a true life of the Protector no longer threatened, there was not a writer — Milton and nearly all those who had

known Oliver being dead — who cared to face the odium which was sure to follow a eulogy. Thurloe, one of the ablest ministers of the seventeenth century, had hidden in the garret above his rooms in Lincoln's Inn that vast collection of papers now preserved in more than six thousand folio pages; a mine from which all late historians of England's Civil War have taken materials for their books. Forty years after Oliver's death a writer whose name is unknown, ventured to falsify Ludlow's fabrications; but we now search in vain for any book written in England within half a century of the Protector's death in praise of him. And through the seventeenth century and for forty-five years of the present century not a book was published which did justice to Cromwell. For nearly two hundred years he was the sport and derision of historians, poets and novelists; sometimes depicted in an elaborate, glaring picture, like that in Walter Scott's "Woodstock;" sometimes branded with infamy in a single line, like that in Gray's "Elegy." His letters, with a few exceptions, were not printed; and his speeches, full of thought, lay dormant through all that time. Not a man or woman in England or in this country read or could read them.



The only man who during the long reign of Charles II. wrote favorably about Oliver was Pepys. Mr. Pepys was a man who was willing to sacrifice himself, both under the Protector and under the king. He was an officer in the Naval Department, and lived in London. He knew Oliver, and he often met Charles; met him on business, and in the parks, and in Whitehall Palace. Mr. Pepys kept a diary. He wrote under a cipher which no one could read but himself. After his interviews with the king, he would go home and make pictures of him, and, for contrast, pictures of Oliver. If Charles could have got sight of Mr. Pepys's diary, and have found an interpreter of it in the year 1667, Mr. Pepys would not only have lost his place in the navy office, but he would have walked the streets of London without his ears, which would have been to him a great calamity. But Charles did not get hold of the diary. Mr. Pepys kept it concealed till his death. It then got, with Mr. Pepys's books, into Magdalene College library, Cambridge, and there it lay unread till about the year 1825. How strange that the only good words written about Oliver during a period of twenty-five years, should have come to the light in this present century.

In one passage Mr. Pepys contrasts the feeble administration of the king with the strong administration of the Protector. "It is strange," he writes, "how everybody do nowadays reflect upon Oliver, and commend him, what brave things he did, and made all the neighbor princes fear him; while here, a man come in with all the love and prayers and good liking of his people, hath lost all so soon, that it is a miracle what way a man could devise to lose so much in so little time." During the reign of James II. one would hardly have dared to praise Oliver even under a cipher.

Doctor George Bates, physician to Charles II., published, in 1685, a book on "The Late Troubles in England." This book is now in the library of Trinity College, Hartford. Carlyle does not refer to it, and probably never saw it. Had he seen it he would have given Bates the same sort of immortality that he has given "Carrion Heath," the author of "Flagellum." The loyalty of Doctor Bates to the Stuarts is clearly indicated in his book. He speaks of the Star Chamber Court, and the Court of High Commission as "shining jewels in the imperial crown," and he says that those who in the time of Charles I. saw things which needed to be

amended in the government, could see "joynts in a bull rush." After alluding to this king as one who combined in his character the patience of Job, the piety of David, and the wisdom of Solomon, he became really poetical in the royal cause. He says he will "hoist sail" and "launch out into the ocean of Charles's virtues." He then changes his figure and says that he will "by a few, and those clouded beams" give "what sight he can of that Sun," "the great defender of the laws." He calls Cromwell a "Blade," and a "great master in hypocrisy and dissimulation." He becomes responsible for the most astounding, incredible lie ever told by a historian, and he gives the lie on the authority of eye-witnesses, who told him of the deed. He says that Cromwell "opened the coffin" which contained the dead king, and, "with his fingers severed the head from the body;" evidently supposing that his readers would believe such a surgical operation possible. He gives particulars of the condition of Cromwell's body after death, which are too disgusting to be repeated. But he corrects one error, for which he should have full credit. He says that Oliver "yielded up the ghost about three of the clock in the afternoon; not (as was commonly reported) carried away

by the Devil, at midnight, but in clear daylight." He speaks of the "mercenary pen of the son of a certain scrivener, one Milton, a man of "livid and malicious wit," "employed to publish a defense of the king's murder."

Carrion Heath and Buzzard Bates, the earliest literary champions of the Stuarts, whose books were once the delight of royalists, who gave inspiration to later historians, and gave to English history a color and gloss which lasted for two centuries, and which, but for such investigations as Macaulay's and Carlyle's, would have lasted for two centuries more, are now, as authorities, happily extinct. In their day they were celebrated, particularly the doctor, who was "a learned and eminent physician of London," who had "an easy access to most of the grandees," and whose book, when "in writing," was looked over by persons high in position. But after all, everything was not bright with Doctor Bates. In an "epilogue," he says that "there is an insolent defamer, who pretends I have fathered another man's work." Poor doctor, accused of literary theft! charged with plagiarism! and such plagiarism! Peace to his ashes.

After William III. came to the throne, there was no danger of a Puritan's losing his life or

liberty for anything he might publish in favor of the Protector; but it required an amount of moral courage to defend him which no one seems to have possessed. And then it must be remembered that thirty years and more had passed since Oliver's death. A great deal is forgotten in that length of time. Those who knew him were nearly all in their graves. The materials for a history, or even of a biography, were limited; but doubtless the strong prejudice against the Commonwealth, and against Oliver, prevented any attempt to publish eulogies. To indicate the prevailing feeling, a fact may be given. In the year 1710, an engraver was at work in Westminster Abbey on a Latin inscription to the memory of the poet John Phillips. He came to the words "*Uni Miltono Secundus*" — next to Milton. The Dean of the Abbey stopped the engraver. That hallowed building must not be desecrated even by the name of Milton on another man's monument. John Phillips, with his poetry, must go down to posterity without it.

Four years later, however, Addison meanwhile having put into the "Spectator" some papers about John Milton and his "Paradise Lost," it was decided by another Dean (Atterbury, who though a loyalist seems to have had sense) that it

would do no harm to the Abbey to have Milton's name on John Phillips's monument. Things sometimes go strangely in this world. Phillips the poet, had a claim on the Abbey, for he had once made an attack on Oliver in a "Satyr against Hypocrites ;" but he was Milton's nephew, and in early life had written a defense of his uncle, whom Wood calls a "villanous leading incendiary." The canons and deans of Westminster, no doubt, talked a good deal over that "*Uni Miltono Secundus*," the relatives and friends of the poet, no doubt, told them that they had better let the engraver insert the words into the epitaph, and so John Phillips survives in the memory of men.

Carlyle is usually rather limited in his praises of authors, and he is particularly so touching those who, before himself, wrote about Oliver ; but he might have said a kind word for John Banks who, in the year 1739, published a book, in the preface of which he asks, "whether a character, so much declaimed against, might at the distance of almost a hundred years be suffered to stand the test of a fair examination?" It needed courage then even to attempt to subject the Protector to a "fair examination," and Banks should have some credit for his book. And

Carlyle, too, might have spared Mark Noble, who put out his biography in 1787, the charge of "extreme imbecility," and "a judgment for the most part dead asleep;" for Noble, as his preface indicates, had at least discovered what other writers have but lately learned; that Cromwell "was the greatest man that had owed his existence to England."

The chief fountain of all the foolish lies that have been circulated about Oliver is the mournful, brown little book called "Flagellum" (a lash, whip, scourge), or the "Life and Death of Oliver Cromwell, the late Usurper," by James Heath. The book had on its title page a picture of the Protector with a halter about his neck. Five editions were published between 1663 and 1679; but now the book is not to be found in our libraries. It was not among the books which Carlyle bequeathed to Harvard University, and probably he used the copy which has been preserved in the British Museum Library. For nearly a hundred years royalist readers found consolation in "Flagellum;" but when Hume appeared and put into eloquent language the fabrications which it contained, and added to them, Heath passed into oblivion.

There were writers of Oliver's day who praised

him while he was living, or soon after his death, who afterward defamed him, and among those writers were Waller, Dryden and South. Waller, in the year 1643, was banished from England for engaging in a plot which cost some men their lives. Ten years later, when Cromwell was in power, he kindly permitted him to return from exile, and he then presented to the Protector, says George Craik, "one of the most graceful pieces of adulation ever offered by poetry to power;" but when Charles II. returned Waller forgot or overlooked the generosity of Cromwell, and welcomed the king to his father's throne. The poem inspired by the restoration, however, was inferior to that which his release from banishment called forth; and it is related that Charles told the poet that his panegyric was not so good as Cromwell's; to which Waller replied that poets succeeded better in fiction than in writing truth.

Dryden, when Richard became Protector, wrote a long poem on Cromwell, in which are found the following lines :

" His grandeur he derived from heaven alone,  
For he was great ere fortune made him so,  
And wars, that rise like mists against the sun,  
Made him but greater seem, not greater grow.



“ His ashes in a peaceful urn shall rest,  
His name, a great example, stands to show  
How strangely high endeavors may be blessed  
When piety and valor jointly go.”

Dryden's changes and apostacies came easily and naturally to him, we believe ; but these verses were probably a true expression of his emotions at the time when he wrote them, soon after the death of the Protector. The lines are not mere poetry.

Oliver was by nature a grand man. He was great before success made him appear so. Wars did not make him greater grow, only made him seem greater to the common eye ; and in spite of the stigmas cast upon it, his name a great example stands, and will stand, to show how high endeavors may be blessed. England is reaping to-day fruits from the seed which he sowed. We in this country are reaping blessings from the changes which he and the Long Parliament secured.

Dryden greeted Charles on his return with his “*Astræa Redux* ;” but during the reign of this king he wrote, he says, only one play for himself ; all the rest, nearly thirty in number, were, he admits, “sacrifices to the vitiated taste of the age.”

Robert South, a student at Oxford, wrote a eulogistic poem on Oliver telling him that he "only could the swelling waves restrain," and lay "fetters on the conquered main;" but when South had become Doctor South, chaplain to royalty, he drew in a sermon a picture of Oliver which delighted the king and his court. "Who," he said, "that had beheld such a bankrupt, beggarly fellow as Cromwell first entering the Parliament House, with a threadbare, torn coat, and a greasy hat (and perhaps neither of them paid for), could have suspected that in course of so few years he should, by the murder of one king and the banishment of another, ascend the throne, be invested with royal robes, and want nothing of the state of a king but the changing of his hat into a crown."

We now come to John Cleaveland, who for many years was supposed to be greatest among living English poets, and who was the "first champion of the royal cause who wrote in English verse."

From the beginning of the war to the end he was a royalist. Next to Cowley he claims our sympathy, and he commands our respect. His picture is not flattering, but it was honestly drawn.

“What’s a Protector? He’s a stately thing  
That apes it in the non-age of a king;  
A tragic actor, Cæsar in a clown,  
He’s a brass farthing, stamped with a crown!  
• • • • •  
“In fine, he’s one we must Protector call,  
From whom the King of kings protect us all.”

Cleaveland was active in the royal cause in 1655, and he found himself in prison. A prisoner, he appealed directly to Oliver. He wrote a letter to him, and wrote it in a spirit that would commend itself to a large-minded and generous-hearted man. There was no apology in the letter. It bore no resemblance to letters which many Englishmen, including Lord Bacon, had written to get themselves out of trouble. "For the service of his majesty," he said, "if it be objected, I am so far from excusing it that I am ready to allege it in my vindication. I cannot conceit that my fidelity to my Prince should taint me in your opinion; I should rather expect it should recommend me to your favor. The truth is, I am not qualified enough to serve him ; all I could do was to bear a part in his sufferings, and to give myself to be crushed by his fall." Had Cromwell possessed the spirit of not a few European rulers the letter would have been unheeded, or would have led to a closer oversight of the

prisoner, but he had nothing little in his nature. The tone of the letter must have touched him — the poet had his freedom.

Lord Clarendon, in his "History of the Rebellion," admits that the Protector had courage, industry, judgment and a wonderful understanding; but he ends his eulogy thus: "He had all the wickedness against which damnation is denounced, and for which hell-fire is prepared," . . . and, "he will be looked on by posterity as a brave, bad man."

Abraham Cowley's vision touching Oliver is a remarkable one. A kind of governing demon of the Protector appears first to the poet, and then Cromwell himself, or rather his ghost, appears. In the dialogue which ensues, the demon advances arguments which Cowley finds it difficult to answer; which he cannot successfully answer.

"What more extraordinary," says the demon, "than that a person of mean birth, no eminent qualities of body or mind, should succeed in the destruction of one of the most ancient and most solid monarchies upon earth," . . . "put his prince and master to an open and infamous death, banish that numerous and strongly allied family; trample upon Parliament as he pleased, spurn them out of doors when he grew weary of

them ; oppress his enemies by arms, and all his friends afterwards by artifice ; serve all parties patiently for a while, and command them victoriously at last ; be feared and courted by all foreign princes, and adopted a brother to the gods of the earth ; call Parliaments with a word of his pen, scatter them with the breath of his mouth ; have the estates and lives of three kingdoms as much at his disposal as was the little inheritance of his father ; be as noble and liberal in the spending of them (the estates), and bequeath all this with one word to his posterity ; to die with peace at home and triumph abroad ; to be buried among kings with more than royal solemnity, and to leave a name behind him not to be extinguished with the whole world ;”

This demon was not far amiss in parts of his picture.

But now Cowley himself encounters Oliver ; but Oliver, the poet admits, takes what he says coolly, and even mirthfully. The poet sees “a figure taller than a giant, the body naked, the battle of Naseby painted on the breast, the eyes like burning brass, three crowns of red-hot metal on the head, a bloody sword in one hand ; in the other hand acts, ordinances, protestations, covenants, engagements, declarations, remonstrances.”

Cowley was not at all daunted, he tells us, by this apparition. He faces the figure bravely, and calls out to it, "What art thou?" Oliver, being now a spirit, answers in a boastful tone, unusual with him when on earth. He answers, "I am called the Northwest Principality, His Highness, the Protector of England, Scotland and Ireland." The poet and this monstrous creation of his fancy hold further intercourse; and then Cowley says: "Here I stopped, and my pretended Protector, who I expected would have been very angry, fell a-laughing at the simplicity of my discourse." No wonder that Oliver thought that Cowley had made a ridiculous picture, with the red-hot crowns, brass eyes and Naseby battle painted on the breast, and laughed at the poet's simplicity; the wonder is that Cowley should have printed such a dream. Kind amiable poet! we wish you had been under the Protector's wing, as Milton was; but fate called you to kiss the hand of the meanest of the Stuarts.

In the year 1808, six years after the first number of the "Edinburgh Review" came out, Francis Jeffrey, its chief editor, expressed his doubt whether any historian "had given a more just or satisfactory account of this extraordinary personage, Oliver Cromwell, than Mrs. Hutchinson,

whose husband, the Colonel, had ‘very early discovered to possess the profoundest duplicity.’ ”

When he wrote this passage, Jeffrey knew no more of Cromwell than the precocious little Macaulay, then eight years old, who, in 1807, wrote in his epitome of history that Oliver “was an unjust and wicked man.” This “boyish scrawl,” says Trevelyan, may still be read; the boy lived to throw light on the Commonwealth and on Cromwell.

Two things Mrs. Hutchinson would have left out of her “Memoirs,” had she been a shrewd woman. She would have omitted the fact that General Cromwell did not estimate highly the soldierly qualities of her husband. That was a discovery made by Colonel Hutchinson before his wife heard of Oliver’s “duplicity.” It hurt Mrs. Hutchinson’s feelings to think that the general of the English army did not appreciate Colonel Hutchinson as an officer. She blurts out her feelings about this matter in her “Memoirs;” she had better have written nothing about them if she expected readers to believe her aspersions on Oliver and his family. But she had another and deeper grievance, which shall be told in her own words.

“The Protector finding him (Col. H.) too

constant to be wrought upon to serve his tyranny, had resolved to secure his person, lest he should head the people, who now grew very weary of his bondage. But though it was certainly confirmed to the Colonel, how much he was afraid of his honesty and freedom, and that he was resolved not to let him longer be at liberty, yet, before his guards apprehend the Colonel, death imprisoned himself, and confined all his vast ambition and all his cruel designs into the narrow compass of a grave."

The allusion in this passage to Oliver's resolution to secure the person of Colonel Hutchinson and deprive him of his liberty, lest he should "head the people and attack the government," throws light on the good wife's appreciation of her husband's executive and military abilities; it would be interesting to know if she reflected at all on the probable result of a conflict between the Colonel at the head of "the people," and Oliver commanding the Ironsides.

Mrs. Hutchinson's "Memoirs," instead of being "satisfactory" touching Jeffrey's "extraordinary personage" of "the profoundest duplicity," are wholly unworthy of notice. They contain the ebullitions of a woman who had within her insurmountable prejudices, founded on a convic-



tion that her husband had not been rightly valued as an army officer ; they contain the unjust censures of a writer whose virulence reached not only the immediate object of her aversion, the Protector, but his wife and children, and the court at Whitehall, which is described as "full of sin and vanity." She tells, however, one thing which is either favorable for Oliver, or damaging to the Puritan clergy : "Almost all the ministers everywhere," she informs us, "fell in and courted this beast."

Mrs. Hutchinson and Ludlow have done more to create wrong impressions about Oliver than all other Puritan writers. Indeed, we are not aware that any old books, written by Puritans decidedly adverse to the Protector, are in existence, though scattered passages left by his Presbyterian, Anabaptist and other opposers can be found. It has seemed to the writer remarkable that so few of his contemporaries, great men, members of Parliament, army officers, came into collision with him ; that so few have left records of their opposition to him.

Of those who openly opposed the Protector and the Protectorate, Ludlow is the most conspicuous. He was twenty years younger than Oliver. Bishop Warburton says that one may

judge of the spirit in which his "Memoirs" were written by his character, which was that of "a furious, mad, but apparently honest Republican and Independent." He was an Oxford graduate, a Temple Bar man, an army officer, one of the six men who arranged Pride's Purge, which was as much a political crime as the disruption of the "Rump," one of the king's judges and a signer of his death warrant. He was an ambitious and an able man.

Cromwell had proved himself the abler soldier and the more successful politician. Ludlow became his enemy and made no secret of his position. He went to Whitehall soon after Oliver was made Protector, had an interview, avowed his opposition to the government, but promised to be peaceable so long as he saw no chance of overthrowing it. He asked to be permitted to retire to his home in Essex, and the request was granted. At Essex, Cromwell kept his eye upon him, and, even on his death-bed, on August 30, 1658, hearing that Ludlow was on his way to London, the Protector sent Fleetwood to ask what his purpose was in leaving Essex. Ludlow replied that he was going to see his sick mother-in-law. A tempest that day was raging over England; it stopped Ludlow's

coach at Epping; it was typical of a worse storm soon to come.

The state of mind in which the famous "Memoirs" were written can be inferred from these facts.

Ludlow thought he discovered the ambition of Oliver for a crown as far back as the battle of Worcester, when the general, in his letter to Parliament, spoke of the success as a "crowning mercy." Oliver was not in the habit of punning, and had he been, he would have had sense enough to know that a play on words sent in an official letter to the Parliament, would not conduce to his elevation to the throne.

A momentary imbecility combined with jealousy can only account for Ludlow's imputation.

And when the time arrives to save the nation from anarchy, "the perfidious Cromwell," says the embittered, malignant author, "forgetting his solemn promises, takes off his mask, resolves to sacrifice all victories to his pride and ambition, under the color of taking upon him the office, as it were, of a high Constable in order to keep the peace of the nation, and to restrain men from cutting each other's throats." No words could better indicate Oliver's position than those with which this sentence ends. Oliver's letters, his

speeches and his actions, Milton's, Maidstone's and others' testimony, will throw light on this "perfidious" Protector before our book is done.

Who would not be kind to Ludlow's memory, and remember what he endured when England no longer had a Constable? Thirty-three years of banishment! That was the penalty which he paid for his work in saving his country from Stuart tyranny. The present writer little thought, when standing, twenty years and more ago, at the exile's grave in Vevay, that the duty would ever fall to him, in vindication of Cromwell, to write a line adverse to Edmund Ludlow, the great Republican, who failed to see that in his time in England one man "alone remained to conduct the government and to save the country."

Passing down half a century we come to Hume. Touching Oliver, Hume was a scavenger. He worked in royalist sewers, dragged out the Protector uncleaned, put him in a historical picture-gallery between the Stuarts, and there he has been for a century and a half; the sight of him a delight to royalists, but an offense to Puritan England and to not a few Americans. Let us look at Hume's statements, and remember that for five or six generations he was pre-eminent for defaming Cromwell.

Hume tells his readers that Oliver was "an artful politician," "an atrocious conspirator," "a fanatical hypocrite," "a barbarian," and "a criminal, whose atrocious violation of sacred duty had, from every tribunal, human and divine, merited the severest vengeance."

These amenities will recall to the reader two sewers, Clarendon and Cleaveland ; and, doubtless, "Carrion Heath," from his "Flagellum," furnished the historian with nouns and adjectives ; as to substantiated facts, adverse to Oliver, there are none in these old books, nor in any books published before or since the year of "unspeakable mercies," 1660.

There is but little in the speeches of Cromwell that is obscure or difficult for a modern reader ; and it is unreasonable to suppose that the men of Cromwell's Parliament, many of whom had listened to Eliot and Pym and Wentworth, should listen patiently for two and even three consecutive hours to a man who spoke without "one glimmer of common sense ;" it is incredible that they should propose to make such a man their king. But Hume tells us that Cromwell did speak to his Parliaments "without one glimmer of common sense." He tells us that Cromwell's elocution was "always confused, embarrassed, unin-

telligible." He tells us that he "spoke in a manner which a peasant of the most ordinary capacity would be ashamed of." Such is Hume's estimate of speeches which are now read by some readers with more intense interest than any other speeches printed in our language, and which have been ranked by Canon Farrar with the speeches of Chatham, Pitt, Fox and Burke.

Hume further says, that "a collection of Oliver's speeches, sermons and letters, with a few exceptions, might pass for a great curiosity, and one of the most nonsensical books in the world." The collection of speeches and letters made by Carlyle is, indeed, a curiosity. Hume himself, whom historians now unite in calling untrustworthy; who painted the Stuarts black on one page, while he wrote on another that they were white; whose works innumerable readers have devoured, age after age, with the certainty of becoming accurately informed about the past; whose history has passed through more editions than the writings of any other English historian, perhaps, excepting Gibbon, is now the curiosity, while Oliver's "Letters and Speeches" are regarded as permanent additions to history, unsurpassed in value by no writings of past centuries.

Met at first by a sale of his history in Eng-

land of only forty-five volumes within a year, and by cries of reproach and detestation, in which royalists, just recovering from the fear of the return of the Stuarts, largely shared, he becomes, when all danger of a second battle of Culloden is over, the most popular historian of England ; he revives the old and almost extinct enthusiasm for the banished royal house. Scores of new editions are called for before the century has closed ; millions of people in peaceful homes, which they owed to the Long Parliament and to Cromwell, read and re-read his pages with delight, and outside of England no history, excepting that in the Bible, secured so many readers ; but Hume's day as a historian, let us hope, is nearly gone ; he will be read, at no distant time, only for his eloquence.

It is not my purpose, within the compass of this book, even to name the English authors who, in describing Oliver's character, have followed in the track of this false historian. A mere catalogue of the names of those who, after Hume, wrote adversely up to the year 1849, when Warburton published his "Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers," defaming Cromwell in it, would require many pages. But there is one French writer who calls for a brief criticism.

Guizot has remarked that Cromwell's "religious faith had exercised but little influence over his conduct;" that "determined to become great, with cynical recklessness he had yielded to the passions of this world." A more unjust statement, based necessarily on information derived from royalist writers, and from Ludlow and Mrs. Hutchinson, does not stain the page of history. Guizot knew almost nothing of Cromwell; had never read his speeches or his letters; was ignorant of his life, except as it had been depicted by enemies, and besides, it is to be remembered that this statesman held opinions about government which unfitted him to form a correct estimate of a man like Cromwell. He failed to see what France needed in the time of Louis Philippe, or, if he saw, failed to use his knowledge; and it was not his place to instruct Englishmen about the civil wars of the Stuarts, or to tell them that Cromwell aspired to leave his name and race in possession of a throne, but that "his crimes raised up obstacles against him which he could not surmount."

The reader must judge for himself, when he comes to the narrative of Oliver's life, about the truth of these aspersions; but the present writer cannot refrain from commenting on them.



Religious faith had but little influence on his conduct ! It was the guiding star of his entire life after he reached manhood. The proof ! His private letters, his deeds of charity and mercy, the testimony of men contemporary with him, whose characters have never been impeached — Maidstone and others. Yielded to the passions of the world with cynical recklessness, in order to become great ! Oliver's only recklessness was shown in meeting dangers in war, and exposing himself, as Constable, to assassins during the Protectorate ; not a line is to be found in his letters, nor a word in his speeches, nor an act in his life, to indicate a desire for position and greatness ; the evidence all points in other directions : to the farm of St. Ives, and to a private, unnoticed life. Aspired to leave his name and race in possession of a throne ! If so, his reticence, his complete silence, his neglect to train a son to fill his place when he is gone, are unaccountable. If so, why did he not name his successor ? It is not proved that voluntarily he even spoke of Richard when near his death ; it is probable, however, that one of his Council named the son, and that he, having no special earthward aspirations at the moment, with feeble breath answered Yes. His crimes raised up

obstacles against him which he could not surmount! This is nonsense; a rhetorical flourish. The only obstacle which Oliver Cromwell ever encountered which he did not surmount, was death.

In closing this chapter it is impossible not to recur to the marked and, indeed, wonderful change in the tone of books in regard to Cromwell since the middle of the present century. Guizot, Southey, Walter Scott, John Forster, Eliot Warburton, all eminent writers, wrote adversely about the Protector; some of them bitterly, virulently; but since the year 1850, not one eminent man, the present writer thinks, has published a malignant or even defaming book. In 1857, according to usage at the beginning of a new reign, under the order of "J. Russell," minister of Her Majesty, Victoria, a blasphemous service, bearing hard on Oliver, was introduced into the English Prayer Book; but that service has been expunged by act of Parliament. A tory review, a few years ago, announced that Oliver's character was a problem still to be solved; but no Englishman, inclined to Stuart royalism, since the announcement was made, has, we believe, undertaken to solve it. That problem was forever solved, for the reading public, in the year 1846.

The only recent publication which we have seen, which has in it the old royalist tone, is an American school history book, published in New York in 1891, which teaches children that Oliver's "perverted ambition . . . prompted him to wade through slaughter to a throne."

## CHAPTER II.

THOMAS CARLYLE.

THOMAS CARLYLE, by collecting and publishing, with elucidations, the letters and speeches of Oliver Cromwell, brought into the light a hero who had been regarded for almost two hundred years, by nearly all readers of English history, as a great soldier pretending to piety of which he was destitute ; and who, simply to gratify his personal ambition, aimed to seat himself on the English throne. Even at the present time, nearly fifty years after the publication of Carlyle's book, both in England and in the United States, the great majority of people who have any impression about the Protector, believe him to have been a hypocrite, and a selfish unprincipled usurper.

It is seldom that a person can be found here in New England who does not hold the views

about Cromwell to which Hume, and writers who have copied Hume, have given currency. There are but few, even among our learned men, who have read Cromwell's letters and speeches. There are many who hate the name of Cromwell. There are some, advanced in age, who do not wish to abandon their life-long prejudices, and who will not seek light on this supreme historical personage. There are others who have tried to read Carlyle's famous book, but have been repelled by the "dry as dust" and "anti dry as dust" contents of the first chapter, and the preliminary work of the second and third chapters. We advise readers to begin at chapter four.

Carlyle's work was not whitewashing, it was simply cleaning; the kind of work done by restorers of old pictures, or of old walls, on which, beneath the filth of centuries, are fine frescoes. Mr. John Fiske has written: "We have long had before our minds the colossal figure of Roman Julius as the foremost man of all this world; but as the seventeenth century recedes into the past, the figure of English Oliver begins to loom up as even, perhaps, the more colossal." True, and why does that figure begin to loom up now? Simply because a few scholars like Mr. Fiske have read Carlyle's "Cromwell," and are able to

see the man whom no historical scholar saw, or could see, fifty years ago.

The calm, cool, judicious Hallam, for instance, who was no advocate for political theories, but a judge, and the fittest man of his day to write the "Constitutional History of England," had not a true conception of Oliver, and he does our hero some injustice. This historian, like his distinguished contemporaries referred to in the preceding chapter, lived before the "full recovery of a true human figure of immense historical importance from below two centuries of accumulated slander and misconception." The quotation is from Froude.

Carlyle recognized the gradual change in opinion which was going on, and he remarks: "In spite of the stupor of histories, it is beautiful once more to see how the memory of Cromwell, in its huge, inarticulate significance, not able to speak a wise word for itself to any one, has, nevertheless, been steadily growing clearer and clearer in the popular English mind; how from the day when high dignitaries, and pamphleteers of the carrion species did their ever memorable feat at Tyburn, onward to this day, the progress does not stop." But, while this is true, it is emphatically true that the "Letters and Speeches"

with the "Elucidations," have revealed to the world its greatest and its noblest ruler.

Macaulay, as already intimated, saw more clearly than any writer of his time what sort of a man Oliver was; but Macaulay had not the material to work on which Carlyle, by his patience and industry, secured. Could Macaulay have possessed himself of the letters and speeches, and then put into his plain and glowing language the thoughts which these letters and speeches suggest, the reading public would long ago have worshiped Cromwell's memory. It is harder work to read Carlyle than it is to read Macaulay's smooth sentences; but once having read him intelligently, one clings to him, and reads him over and over again.

The debt, then, which we owe to Thomas Carlyle is a large one. With the letters, speeches and the elucidations he has made a picture of Oliver which no Stuart loyalist can ever mar or change. The order said to have been given to Lely, "Paint me as I am," has been faithfully, accurately executed; and unless other letters and other speeches of a character wholly different from those now published, shall hereafter appear, the portraiture which he has drawn will stand, with not a blemish, amid the most notable historic portraits of modern times.

Before deciding on Cromwell for a subject, Carlyle worked on the Commonwealth, and "lost four years of good labor in the business"—"four years of abstruse toil, obscure speculations, futile wrestling and misery." He then burnt a part of his materials, "locked away" the rest, and decided to make "Oliver the center of his composition." He seems to have come slowly to the opinion that the Protector was the great and good man whom he represents him to have been. Indeed, from one of the Craigen-puttock papers, it may be inferred that he shared in early life the prevailing opinions on the subject. He says himself that he began "not knowing what he would make of it." He was in "a hideous, enormous bog." His "progress is frightful, but his conscience drives him on." After a time he thinks he shall "make something of it in the end," little dreaming that he would produce the most valuable historical book of his century. When he sees "some fruit" of his "unspeakable puddlings and welterings," and possesses himself of the "authentic utterances of the man Oliver, fished up from the foul Lethean quagmires, where they lay buried," he hopes that he shall "get the poor book done, and that it will turn out to have been worth doing." "If I can show Oliver





OLIVER CROMWELL.  
*(From the portrait by Vandyke)*



as he is, I shall do a good turn." Such were the records of Carlyle in his diary, at about forty-five years of age, when editors of reviews and booksellers in England were still looking askant at him; fearing to lose subscribers if they published his review articles, or fearing to lose money if they published his books.

It is to the honor of New England that Emerson discovered what was in Carlyle at a time when the man "expected nothing from the world but continued indifference;" and sent him, when almost in the dregs of poverty, three drafts for the "French Revolution," from a Boston publishing house, before he had received one pound from London booksellers, for the same.

As to his Cromwell, Froude says, "No shadow of a doubt about the genuineness of the portrait can be entertained;" and he adds, "it is Carlyle's supreme merit that he first understood the speeches made by Cromwell in Parliament, and enabled us to understand them. Printed as they had hitherto been, they could only confirm the impression, either that the Protector's mind was hopelessly confused, or that he purposely concealed what was in it. Carlyle has shown that they are perfectly genuine speeches, not eloquent, as modern parliamentary speeches are, or aspire

to be thought, but the faithful expressions of the most real and determined meaning, about which those who listened to him could have been left in no doubt at all."

The greatest man, and the best ruler of the seventeenth century, at last is rescued from the slums of history by the greatest Englishman of the nineteenth century; or to use the words of Chambers's *Encyclopædia*: "To Carlyle has fallen the unspeakable honor of replacing in the Pantheon of English History the statue of England's greatest ruler." Cowper's line, "Build him a pedestal, and say, 'Stand there,'" would be no unfit motto for the work which Carlyle has done for the memory of Cromwell. "Let the reader," says H. A. Taine, member of the French Academy, "consider Carlyle's Cromwell, and he will see with what justice, exactness, depth of insight one may discover a soul beneath its actions and works; how, behind the old general, in place of a vulgar, hypocritical schemer, we recover a man." "One may follow him from his farm and team to the general's tent, and to the Protector's throne; in his transmutations and development, in his pricks of conscience and his political conclusions, until the machinery of his mind and actions becomes visible; and the tragedy,

ever changing and renewed, which exercised this great, darkling soul, passes, like one of Shakespeare's, through the soul of the looker-on."

Again, says Taine: "We must read this history of Carlyle to understand how far this sentiment of actuality penetrates him; with what knowledge it endows him; how he rectifies dates and texts; how he verifies traditions and genealogies; how he visits places, examines the trees, looks at the brooks, knows the agriculture, prices the whole domestic and rural economy, all the political and literary circumstances; with what minuteness, precision and vehemence he reconstructs before his eyes, and before our own, the external picture of objects and affairs, the internal picture of ideas and emotions; and it is not simply on his part conscience, habit, or prudence, but need and passion."

Again we quote from Taine: "Grave constitutional histories hang heavy after this compilation. The author wished to make us comprehend a soul, the soul of Cromwell, the greatest of the Puritans, their chief, their abstract, their hero and their model. His narrative resembles that of an eye witness." . . . "At last we are face to face with Cromwell. We have his words. We can hear his tone of voice; we see him in

his tent, in council, . . . with his face and costume ; every detail, the most minute, is here. Would that all history were like this ; a selection of texts provided with a commentary. Cromwell comes forth, reformed and renewed. We divined pretty well already that he was not a mere man of ambition, a hypocrite ; but we took him for a fanatic and hateful wrangler. We considered these Puritans as gloomy madmen, shallow brains and full of scruples. Let us quit our French and modern ideas and enter into these souls ; we shall find in them something else than hypochondria, namely, a grand sentiment. Am I a just man ? and if God who is perfect justice were to judge me at this moment what sentence would he pass upon me ? Such is the original idea of the Puritans, and through them came the revolution in England. We laugh at a revolution about surplices and chasubles ; there was a sentiment of the divine underneath all these disputes of vestments. Those poor folk, shop-keepers and farmers, believed with all their hearts in a sublime and terrible God, and the manner how to worship him was not a trifling thing for them. This has caused the revolution, and not the Writ of Ship-money, or any other political vexation."

In history, in novels, and in poetry the Puritan of the seventeenth century has often been depicted; his picture, that of the sinister hypocrite, is distinctly impressed on us; but of the royalist churchman of the Charles II. type, we have no accurate portrait. The extreme Puritan we know; but of the extreme political defenders of the church who cared nothing for religion, who were compelled to swear belief to the doctrines of the church before securing a seat in Parliament, or admission to the court, royalist writers have given us only imperfect pictures. It was the church establishment, and not Christianity, for which these conformists cared.

Perhaps Mr. Rees, who was one of a committee who waited on Lord Thurlow, minister of George III., to ask for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Act may give us a correct idea of them: "Gentlemen," said Lord Thurlow, "I am against you, by God. I am for the established church, d—n me. Not that I have any more regard for the established church than for any other church, but because it is established. And if you could get your d—d religion established, I'll be for that too."

In the time of Charles II., when a man could not be a custom-house officer unless he was a

churchman, there must have been Thurlows ; but they have not been described, like the Puritans, as unworthy members of society. It is unfair to keep Praise God Barebones in sight, and hide the Thurlows who were conformists. Outside the court, in the country towns and villages, during the seventeenth century, true piety was about equally shared by the Puritans and churchmen. The homes of John Howe and George Herbert were not unlike,



## CHAPTER III.

### EARLY LIFE.

IT has been said that for Oliver's boyhood there is "nothing but unlimited conjecture and most dubious legend ;" and Carlyle tells us that the boy "went through the universal destinies which conduct all men from childhood to youth, in a way not particularized by an authentic record." But there is one authentic record which even Carlyle's careful search did not secure. In the parish book which records the baptism of Oliver is also a notice of his having been subjected to some sort of ecclesiastical discipline at the age of seventeen, for an offense which he had committed. What the offense was is not indicated, but it probably was connected in some way with the church or its services. The date of the record is a little — perhaps a year — before the time when

Laud was made Archdeacon of Huntingdon, his first promotion; and it is not unlikely, trained as Oliver had been by his parents and by his schoolmaster, Dr. Beard, a Low Churchman, that he manifested some dislike of changes which he noticed in the manner of conducting the services, or in the chancel arrangements of the church.

Perhaps Oliver had not an appreciating eye for the new ecclesiastical garments which were then coming into fashion, or perhaps he did not like to see the communion table to which his mother had become accustomed changed and made into an altar; and, boy-like, was a little imprudent in speech or actions. We do not know, and we never shall know, what the trouble was, or what the punishment was; but the record stands, and has stood for nearly three hundred years, on the parish book, telling that Oliver had done something wrong; and as this is the only indication of the kind connected with his life, the only proof adverse to his good character, it can do his memory no special harm to mention it here.

Oliver was born in Huntingdon, a small hamlet about fifteen miles from Cambridge, on the twenty-fifth of April, 1599. The house in which

he spent his early days is still standing, but it has been much changed. His family, at the time of his birth, was not an obscure one. His father and three of his uncles had sat in the Parliaments of Queen Elizabeth. A royalist uncle, Oliver's godfather, who lived in the great, and even then, historical house, called Hinchinbrook, only half a mile from Oliver's home, was so prominent a man that King James nearly ruined him, financially, by his visits. The Hinchinbrook mansion still remains, and its external appearance is now much as it was three hundred years ago.

Besides the uncle, Sir Oliver, the boy had many relatives who were prominent in English society. One of his aunts was Mrs. Hampden, the mother of John Hampden, who was a great man, and at one period of his life the most talked of, and the most revered, of all the men in England. The social position, then, of Oliver's family was that of the English gentry, between the nobility and the yeomanry; his relations were people of property, education and good breeding. But "better than all social rank," Oliver's father "is understood to have been a wise, devout, steadfast and worthy man; and to have lived a modest and manful life." Even in "Cromwelliana," we read that Mr. Robert Cromwell was "a gentleman

who went no less in esteem and reputation than any of his ancestors for his personal worth, until his unfortunate production of his son and heir ; ” and of Oliver’s mother it is only necessary here to say that she imparted to her son some of her own good qualities, that she deeply loved her son, and that Oliver tenderly watched over her from the time when she became a widow in 1617, till, in 1654, she died in Whitehall Palace at the age of ninety-four.

His parents were religious after the Puritan type, and from them he doubtless first learned that Bible language which clung to him through life, and which in his use of it was not cant, but the simplest and most natural form of speech. Oliver received his home-training at a time when a Puritan was what the name indicates ; when the name was one of reproach ; when it suggested persecution, and when there was no advantage to be gained in being a hypocrite under it. There were but few, if any, hypocritical Puritans before the time of the Long Parliament, forty-one years after he was born ; there were many of them when Puritanism became a power in the government, and a title to favor and rewards.

Oliver, too, in that Huntingdon home, in addition to his religious training, was securing a

political education (for religion and politics were identical in those days) from the time that he began to think at all seriously on any subject. The talks at the fireside were of the atrocities of Elizabeth's reign; of the emigrants, sixty to seventy thousand of them who, driven by the persecutions of Philip II. and of Alva, had settled within fifty years in the eastern counties of England; of that ecclesiastical farce, the Hampton Court Conference, which gave King James so much sport, and which gave the Puritans so much disappointment and distress; of the Spanish fleet, the Armada, which, a few years before his birth, had been sent for the purpose of conquering the country and forcing it to become Roman Catholic; of the attempt to blow up the Parliament House and all the Protestants in it; of the stabbing by Jesuits, in Paris, of Henry, one of the Protestant champions of the day; of King James's claim to "absolute sovereignty," his claim to "freedom from all control by law," his claim to passive obedience as a religious obligation, binding on all his subjects, his claim to "the power to alter the religion" of men and women, as the representative of the Almighty, and to do this sacred work with shears and branding irons, where sermons failed; to do this

in behalf of the court of Heaven, when the orgies of the court at Whitehall were the scorn and derision of all Puritans.

Talks about these matters Oliver often listened to in the Huntingdon home before he reached the age of twenty. These talks, and the abundant pamphlets of the time, gave him his early political training; and two years after he was twenty, when a farmer, he was looking after his cows and sheep, leading a quiet peaceful life, his political education was supplemented by learning that the patriots of the Parliament of 1621, all of whom were loyal to the government, had failed in their object to control taxation, and to secure the "privilege of free discussion;" that the king had been to the Parliament House, and with his own hand had torn from the statute-book the record of their votes, and had sent a message to the members forbidding them to inquire into the mysteries of State. It is conceivable that Oliver's thoughts, when news of these things reached him, were not limited to his cattle; it is probable that his mind expanded not a little politically when he heard of the royal doings in the Parliament of 1621.

The reader must not for a moment suppose that we have been drawing a fancy picture. It is,

and must be, a true picture even in its minutest details. Dr. Beard, Oliver's teacher when a boy, as well as his adviser in youth, besides being a reader of books, and a publisher of books, was a sharp-sighted man, ready for political or any other useful talk. He had his eyes wide open. He knew what was going on. Seven years after the time of which we have been speaking, when Oliver went up to London to sit as member in the Parliament of 1628, Dr. Beard had his eye on him, and furnished him with the subject of his first parliamentary speech. It is impossible that the boy and the young man should have escaped the education on politics which we have noted, with such a man as Dr. Beard at his side, shut up in a little village like Huntingdon.

The home of Oliver's boyhood was a pleasant one. Through the grounds about it flowed a brook, which is suggestive of sport, though we are not sure that it contained trout. The fens abounded in game. There was nothing particularly interesting in the scenery, but the surroundings of Hinchinbrook were attractive. The walk to the grand old house of his uncle and godfather could be taken within a few minutes. Oliver's father had an income, it is reported, of about

five thousand dollars a year, and his mother had about one thousand dollars a year, reckoning money at its present value. There was probably no lack of such comforts as were found in the houses of the gentry. He had no brother, but he had six sisters who grew to womanhood, two of whom married colonels; one married a general, and a fourth, after the death of her first husband, who was a doctor, married another doctor who became a bishop. These facts tell in favor of Oliver's sisters, and indicate that the family was not an obscure one. With these sisters the boy must have learned to sing, for in later life he sang in the midst of battle; and in quiet hours, when such came, he sang in the palace of Whitehall.

To the stories of royalists, that when a boy he stole apples out of orchards and that he fought with other boys, stories grounded on "human stupidity and Carrion Heath," Carlyle gives Christian burial. The probability is, that, with such a mother as he had, and with his many sisters, he was not, as represented in history, an evil-minded boy. The face, made from a cast taken after death, is a noble one — even beautiful when long looked at; and though poets, in the Stuart interest, found a subject for their rhyme



in his prominent red nose, it is pleasant to believe that the face of the youth was not at all ill-looking.

One thing certainly can be put to Oliver's credit, his intimate connection, far into manhood, with the teacher of his boyhood. Most fortunate were his relations to Dr. Beard. The doctor grounded him in Latin and prepared him for Cambridge; but, as we have seen, he gave him another education, one that was to leave its effects on the history of England. Oliver secured enough Latin to enable him to talk in that language, but it is reported that he did not talk very well. It is not improbable that Dr. Beard awakened in him a love for books, and that he laid the foundation of his fine library while yet a farmer of Huntington and St. Ives. It is certain that long after the school days were over, scholar and teacher were often together, and they seem to have acted in concert.

The doctor was a Puritan, but Puritans in his time, as before stated, were what the name implied. Sham Puritanism, thirty to forty years later than the years of which we are writing, was grim, sour, long-faced, whining; not so that of Oliver's childhood. The fact that Dr. Beard was a Puritan in Elizabeth's reign and in the first part of the

seventeenth century, carries with it the idea that he was a good, kind and truly Christian man. Since writing this sentence my eye falls on the following one in Green's History: "The lighter and more elegant sides of the Elizabethan culture harmonize well enough with the temper of the Puritan gentleman."

The sports within the reach of Oliver in his boyhood, apart from fowling and fishing, were rather limited; but it is known that foot-ball was within his compass. The game played then in Huntingdon was not, indeed, what the game is to-day. It was not so scientific. No report of scores was sent over England. Cambridge and Oxford professors did not watch the results with any special interest. But, in spite of detractions, the boy enjoyed his foot-ball, and it must have been a trial, after he had learned the game, to find a competitor at Cambridge who could beat him.

Mrs. Hutchinson says that Oliver was afraid of her husband; but the only authentic record of Oliver's ever having had fear connects itself, not with Colonel Hutchinson, but with foot-ball. This record may be found in a late publication of "The Prince Society," Boston, by Charles H. Bell. "I remember the time," said the Lord

Protector, "when I was more afraid of meeting John Wheelwright at foot-ball, than I have been since of meeting an army in the field, for I was infallibly sure of being tripped up by him." Any gleam of light on our hero is worth having, but these words are especially interesting in this foot-ball age. We have but little hope of awakening interest touching Oliver among scholars, or even of their reading our little book; but perhaps foot-ball men will find interest in it just here, and by the year 1899 will have erected a marble foot-ball group, with Oliver and Wheelwright in the center, to commemorate two champions of the seventeenth century.

The great ruler, the Protector of New England, may be neglected; it may be difficult to raise money enough even to buy a picture of the warrior, the statesman and the saint; but connect his memory with foot-ball, and the difficulty would be overcome. We do not think the suggested monument would be the most desirable one for the perpetuation of Oliver's name; but it would be better than nothing, and nothing have we yet in New England.

One great attraction for Oliver, outside of his home, was the house of his uncle. The sumptuosities of that house, which, of course, included

a good deal of eating and drinking, were such that they finally brought financial ruin to godfather Oliver, and compelled him to retire to a smaller and less expensive establishment far off in the fens. But the expenses and the shows were kept up all through Oliver's youth, and he had the full benefit of them.

Pictures of Hinchinbrook mansion have lately been brought out in this country, showing the old Norman gateway, and a part of the old nunnery ; and the place is described as being now one of the loveliest of old English homes. Oliver's grandfather, Sir Henry Cromwell, "enlarged and as good as built" Hinchinbrook. He was called the Golden Knight because he spent and gave away so much money. He died in January, 1603, when Oliver was nearly four years old. The little boy saw "funeralia and crapes, saw father and uncles with grave faces, and understood not well what it meant ; understood only, or tried to understand, that the good old grandfather was gone away, and would never pat his head any more."

Oliver's uncle and godfather succeeded Sir Henry at Hinchinbrook ; and a few months after establishing himself, he received a message from King James of Scotland, that on his journey to

London to take the crown, which Elizabeth's death had vacated, he would stop for a visit at the Hinchinbrook house. The king arrived about the last of April, 1603, and remained as a guest for two days; a short visit, but a good deal can be done in the matter of expense within a brief time when one has a king and his retinue to entertain. "Uncle Oliver, besides the ruinously splendid entertainments, gave James hounds, horses and astonishing gifts" . . . "in return there were knights created, Sir Oliver the first of the batch we may suppose." . . . "King James had decided that there should be no reflection for the want of knights."

Let us take a glance into the big hall of the fine old house, and try to see what is going on there on the morning of April 28, 1603. Little Oliver is certain to be an early arrival. Nothing could keep him at home that morning. His good mother probably found it difficult to keep him quiet while she was arranging his cuffs and collar. There were no Barnum shows in that day at Huntingdon, and to see the gorgeous king and his Scotch attendants, in their strange dresses and feathers, and the tables spread with all kinds of luxuries that could be had, was a chance for him not to be missed. Knighthood,

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in the olden times of chivalry, had a significance ; it meant something when the receiver of it had “won his spurs ;” and in late times, men who have become distinguished by doing something worth doing, rightly have the honor conferred on them ; but the chief use of knighthood in King James’s time, appears to have been to get money to eke out the royal revenue.

Sir Oliver had done nothing to entitle him to a garter or a ribbon, but the king knew that he was rich and was disposed to make presents. Later on the king directly sold the title of “Sir ;” but it is not likely that he began that sort of trade on the occasion of this visit, and before he was crowned. He secured his pay out of Sir Oliver indirectly — by visits at Hinchinbrook, by receiving gifts — until at last the knight became so reduced in income that he was compelled to sell Hinchinbrook to one of the Montagues ; the Montagues still hold the place. Hume tells us, and for such a statement he is credible, that James brought with him from Scotland a great number of Scottish courtiers, and that as he passed along all ranks of men flocked about him from every quarter. The nobility, of course, came to Hinchinbrook with their best clothes and ornaments, adding to the interest of the spectacle.

Oliver, when he became a man, was indifferent about dress, in fact, laid himself open to criticism for appearing in Parliament in a shabby suit made by a country tailor; but the brilliant dresses in his uncle's hall must have delighted him, especially the Scottish ones. But the grand sight was the knighting. The king, in all his glory of adornment, surrounded by the glittering crowd, had kneeling at his feet the subjects who henceforth were to belong to a noble order which could be traced far back of the Plantagenets into dim antiquity. It is to be regretted if Uncle Oliver did not secure for his godson a good position where he could see all that was going on; if, however, Oliver, at the age of four, had any of the persistency which marked his later life, he did not need his uncle's help.

It rather detracts from the value and dignity of James's knights to know, as we do from history, that he made more than two hundred of them before he had been in England six months; but, happily, it was not known at Hinchinbrook, when he was there, that he would belittle the honor by the profusion of his favors. Queen Elizabeth had been blamed for making so few knights; James, it was soon thought, had made too many.

Royalists have related that in the following year, 1604, little Prince Charles, then four years old, on his way from Scotland to London was taken to Hinchinbrook; that the two boys met there and got into a quarrel in which Oliver gave the Prince a bloody nose. This is the tradition. Probably the boys met, played together, may have quarreled, but there is no evidence to be found relating to this matter. Royalists must have been short of material adverse to Oliver when they put this report into English history.

Historians have written not a little, in order to put a mark of disgrace on Cromwell, in connection with the brewing business. Brewer is a common title of the Protector, even now, and especially here in New England. The earliest Stuart writer on this matter says that he was not a brewer, that the brewing was done by his father. There is not, however, the least proof that the father carried on brewing as a business. The income of the family, six thousand dollars a year, would indicate that selling beer was not the source of so large a revenue. There was no tea or coffee in Huntingdon or in England during Robert Cromwell's life; beer was a universal drink, and it is probable that a thrifty farmer



would convert a part of his grain into that beverage.

In the year 1617, King James is again at Hinchinbrook. He is on his way to Scotland. His object is to get his Scottish bishops to be revered and financially supported by Presbyterian Calvinists who hated the mere name of bishop. Dr. Laud, then king's chaplain and also Archdeacon of Huntingdon, is with him. Sir Oliver's purse is now "growing lank," and Robert Cromwell, at his house near by, is sick and not far from death. Oliver has been studying for a year at Cambridge, in Sidney-Sussex College, the focus of Puritanism. Probably he was at home at the time of the royal visit, but if at home he would not seek to see the king or the archdeacon; sad to tell, it is doubtful if the uncle would care to see his godson. It was inevitable that they should separate. Sir Oliver was a devoted loyalist; Oliver was already so imbued with Puritanism, and so well informed of the character and of the government of the king, that intercourse between his uncle and himself could hardly be agreeable.

The after story is a very dismal one, and it is all comprehended in a few bare cold facts of history. Not a letter now extant alludes to it;

not a writer can tell it in its particulars. That Oliver suffered, that he suffered keenly at the estrangement, even into the time of the Protectorate, into which his uncle lived, his general character, his humane feelings compel us to believe ; that the uncle was overwhelmed, sorrow stricken, at what he deemed the disgraceful disloyalty of his nephew, cannot for a moment be doubted.

What a scene, that at Ramsey, off in the fens, soon after the war broke out. The uncle was living there, "having burned out his splendors" at Hinchinbrook, and Oliver, now Captain Cromwell, is compelled by his duty to the Parliament to search his house for arms, which might, if not secured, be sent to the king at York. The old books say that Captain Cromwell stood "uncovered" in the presence of his uncle while the search was going on ; what they said, what they thought, no one can ever know. Friendships were broken, families were torn asunder in the civil war ; but there was no sadder sight than that at Ramsey, when Sir Oliver Cromwell saw standing before him with uncovered head, the Parliament officer at whose christening in infancy he had stood as godfather.

One or two more facts will bring us to the

farming life of our hero. His father died in 1617, and he at once left Cambridge. He returned to his home to live with his mother, and to take the care of the estate. Royalist writers say, that the "blade," in early life, wasted his time and property in dissipation, but there is no proof offered by them, and the known facts of his life are certainly against this theory. Some months after his father's death he went to London, probably to get such knowledge of law as would be useful to a citizen, and there he is married to Elizabeth Bouchier, to whom, thirty years later, he could write, "Thou art dearer to me than any creature." A record of the marriage now stands in the old registry of St. Giles's Church, Cripplegate. The time was August, 1620. It was the month when the Mayflower, in the harbor of Southampton, took on board the pilgrims who were to land at Plymouth. He soon took his wife to Huntingdon, and there, in the same house with his mother, begins his life as a farmer.

## CHAPTER IV.

### FARMER.

To make Oliver Cromwell visible as a farmer, with only four of his letters to throw light on his farming life, is not an easy thing to do ; and yet, some attempt to portray him in that character is suggested by the little that is known of his twenty years of life in that occupation. Some conception of his surroundings, of his lands, of his duties and cares, may be derived from encyclopædias, and from Carlyle's descriptions ; and not a little may be inferred from what Doctor William Elliot Griffis has written in "The Influence of the Netherlands in the Making of the English Commonwealth, and the American Republic."

Oliver spent ten years as a farmer in his home of Huntingdon, six years at St. Ives, which was

only five miles away, and four years at Ely, a cathedral town, which was also but a short distance from his early home.

There were influences about him, through all these twenty years, which tended to the formation of a thoughtful and strong character. He lived through these years in that part of England (in one of the eastern counties) where lived nearly all the great English patriots of the early part of the seventeenth century, and where were born most of those emigrants who fled from James I. and Charles I. to New England. Going over the meadows and through the bogs with his branding-iron, which the Rev. Mark Noble says was in existence in his day, and which would be better worth seeing now than any crown which kings have worn, this young man, Oliver, was learning something all the time outside of his farming operations; and in his hours of leisure he came in contact with not a few of the great men who were beginning a work which was to end in the extinction of those imperial "shining jewels," the "Star Chamber," and the "High Commission Courts," and in the overthrow of an oppressive Government.

He was twenty years old when he began his farming life; he was forty-one when he quitted

it. Among the men with whom he consorted, during this period of his life, and who were leaders on the side of liberty, were some of his own relations.

Sir William Masham, "a busy man in the politics of his time," was a cousin. St. John, the celebrated ship-money lawyer, who defended Hampden in the great lawsuit of 1637, was married to one of his cousins. Hampden himself, whose statue now stands in St. Stephen's Hall, "to represent the noblest type of the Parliamentary opposition," was the son of his father's sister. With these men, and others like them, he associated, and from them he learned of what was going on at the court and in the country.

When Philip II. of Spain, in the year 1567, with a few strokes of his pen doomed to death from eighty to one hundred thousand inhabitants of the Netherlands, he little foresaw all the results of that decision. He little dreamed that Alva's work would sow the seeds of liberty on the eastern shores of England, and that those seeds would, within a century, be scattered beyond the Atlantic on a continent which would one day more than rival his South American dominions. Yet such was the fact. Dr. Griffis has demonstrated that fact, and the present writer will take the

liberty to use some of his statements. He says that before the end of Alva's rule between eighty and one hundred thousand persons found a home in England; that most of these refugees settled in the eastern counties; that they made great changes there; that they introduced table vegetables and the cultivation of winter roots, which were unknown before they came; that they drained the fens and taught the people to cultivate the land; that to these Dutchmen, who, in all kinds of cultivation and in all kinds of knowledge, "in the fine arts, music, civic architecture, painting, science, learning, agriculture, inventions, organized industries, navigation, finance, political science," were far superior to the English, may be traced influences which, in no small degree, led to changes, not only in the industrial, but in the political and religious conditions of the country. Under the industry of these Hollanders "the fens of Eastern England became a garden," and Dr. Griffis claims that nearly all the political institutions peculiarly American came out of Holland and not out of England.

Cromwell, during his farmer life, could not fail to have association and close intercourse with these Dutch settlers. He probably knew some of the earlier refugees, for Alva continued his

destructive work for nearly twenty years — until 1573 — when he returned to Philip, and was able to report that, besides those whom he had slain in battle, there were eighteen thousand whom his “Court of Blood” had executed, and that there were about one hundred thousand who had left the country and gone into exile. Not only is it certain that Oliver knew many of these Dutch refugees, but it is probable that he employed some of them on his lands. The same sympathy which led him, when Protector, to watch over persecuted Protestants abroad, would lead him to give aid to those who had been compelled, in exile, to seek employment.

Many of these refugees were learned men, holding views about government and freedom of which Englishmen, in Elizabeth’s time and later, had no conception; it is not at all improbable that Oliver, the farmer, acquired, in no small degree from them, that knowledge and that spirit which led him, later on in life, when the European world was clamoring for the divine right of kings, to become the advocate and the supporter of the divine right of the people.

It is a fact well proved that this farmer’s activities were not confined to the cultivation of his lands or the care of his cattle. It is proved that



he was not a selfish accumulator. It is proved that his heart went out toward those in distress. He was known in his day as the friend of the poor. There are, indeed, but four letters which remain to throw light on these twenty years, but it happens that two of the four letters relate exclusively to charities, one written in the interest of a clergyman, and the other in the interest of a poor old sick man; and it happens, too, that the third letter asks the person to whom it is addressed to put a certain gentleman in mind "to do what he can for the poor cousin I did solicit him about." Now, when three out of four extant letters are of this sort, it may be inferred that kind deeds were done all through the farming life. Few modern philanthropists, can show such good proportionate records as Oliver, in the matter of charity letters and charity works.

The reader will mark that these three letters were written voluntarily; that they came naturally out of his warm and generous heart. The fourth of the letters, all that are left of the twenty years of farming life, is the first of his extant letters, and a notable one; it is embraced in the chapter on "Letters."

It would be interesting to know just what kind of a farmer Oliver was, how much he worked

himself ; how much labor he got out of his boys, Richard and Henry ; how he lived as to his table ; how he dressed ; if the Dutch taught him to have a vegetable garden, a rare luxury in England, then ; if he made a financial success with his cows and sheep, but these things and many others we shall never know about. Almost the only light from these farms comes to us through the charity letters. Still, it is pleasant for the present writer to think that he was a rather successful farmer. He knows that when Oliver went up to the Parliament of 1640, which was the end of his farming life, he had money, and enough of it to enable him to subscribe largely to the war fund, although the Rev. Dr. South intimates that his hat and coat were not paid for.

The early Stuart historians would lead their readers to believe that Oliver was rather a failure as a farmer ; that he was not a wise and prudent farmer ; that he spent altogether too much time in praying when he should have been looking after his idle men in the fields, who were taking advantage of his piety in recreation ; if so, he was a remarkable specimen of a hypocrite, wasting money thus on his laborers. These old royalist writers are sometimes very funny, and are often inconsistent. These writers' elucidations

of Oliver are as much at variance as the pictured caricatures which have come down to us from the old engravers.

At one time during his farmer life, Oliver emerged from obscurity and acquired the name, or nickname, of "Lord of the Fens." The drainage of the fens meant the carrying of the water of the river Ouse twenty miles direct to the sea, and the prevention of its overflowing large portions of the country. It was a great work for those times, and promised to make cultivable lands that were useless. The idea of it, most likely, came from the Dutch. The work was nearly completed, when the king, in council, attempted to do a public injustice in regard to it. Thereupon a great meeting was held in Huntingdon, farmers coming to it from the surrounding country ; and at the meeting Oliver opposed the interference of the king, when that "operation of going in the teeth of the royal will was somewhat more perilous than it would be now." He got into trouble about the business, and for a short time was deprived of his liberty. In his "History of the Rebellion," Lord Clarendon refers to this matter, and more than intimates that Oliver, in a conference with him about it, showed a good deal of temper. This is quite

credible. Farmers living on boggy wet lands are inclined to secure drainage ; and if a king, or any one else, interferes with a sluice way or canal for carrying off excess of water, it would certainly be natural to show anger.

It is evident from what occurred in connection with this Huntingdon meeting of citizens, were there no other evidence, and from the title which Oliver secured, that he was an active and prominent man among his farmer neighbors ; and probably no better councilor or magistrate, or more just justice of the peace could be found in the region where he lived.

The reader has already discovered that only a little can be told of the twenty years of farming ; but that what is discoverable indicates a man discharging his duties in a manful way, leading a quiet, unnoticed life, growing grass and raising cattle. We have before us a stout, able-bodied Puritan, who reads his Bible, says his prayers, goes to church, has children born to him, has them baptized, leads an inoffensive, humble life ; does his duty as to charity, interferes with what he thinks is wrong about fen drainage ; looks after his mother, his wife and little children ; and learns, though a farmer, what he can of what is going on in England, and all this without a

thought of the wonderful future which lies before him. Many a time, striding over those bogs of Huntingdon and St. Ives, this farmer reflected on the oppressed condition of his country; but it is doubtful if he had then any heroic thoughts or had one glimpse of future greatness. Duty, in his narrow sphere, was all. Had he ambition to become a leader, had he nurtured such a wish in those quiet pastures, years would not have passed after he entered Parliament without some demonstration of that desire.

When first he enters on public life he is but a plain farmer and a gentleman. He has, indeed, his thoughts on the political problems of his day, but he is no statesman; he has no plans, he has no thought except to give his votes on the side of freedom from oppression, and liberty for those enslaved. Circumstances made him. Acts of others — Eliot, Pym, Hampden — yes, royalists too; Falkland, Wentworth and others, created the conditions which brought him into notice, and which finally led him to offer his service to his country in the humblest position which a gentleman could hold, without a title and without a sword.

It was in the second year of Oliver's residence at St. Ives — 1632 — that Sir John Eliot, an

acquaintance and probably a friend, died in the Tower. The Parliament of 1628 contained many great statesmen, but there were among them none who in genius, in power of using language, in loftiness of purpose, and devotion to his country surpassed this great orator. The fragments of his speeches, which can now be read, indicate a man of superior ability, and a patriot inflexible in his purpose to reform the Government. He was one of those who, with Wentworth, then on the side of the people, framed the "Petition of Right," asking that no taxes be raised without the consent of Parliament, and that no freeman shall be imprisoned for refusing to pay taxes imposed by the king alone; and, on the last day of the sitting, he spoke against yielding to the unjust demands of James.

A few days after the dissolution of the Parliament, he and others were summoned to appear before the king's council, and after examination were committed to prison. All but Eliot after a time were set at liberty, not by mercy, but rather from fear, warnings of trouble in the country having reached the king. Eliot's appeals were unavailing. He remained in the Tower for four years, until 1632, and a few weeks after asking for temporary release, on account of his impaired

health, telling His Majesty at the same time that he was sorry to have displeased him, he died there, a martyr to the cause of English liberty. Eliot was not a Puritan ; he was simply the advocate of a government for the people, and not for the exclusive use and benefit of the king.

Oliver was a member, a farmer member, of that Parliament of 1628 ; he doubtless heard the speeches made by Eliot, and after the Parliament was ended he had eleven years, up to the Parliament of 1640, to reflect upon them. They were speeches not to be forgotten. Many years have passed since the present writer read them, but the impressions which they left have not been effaced. What, then, must have been their effect on one who heard them, and was an observer and an actor in the politics of the time !

Children were born to Oliver during the years now covered, but it is needless here to record even their names.

In the year 1636, another change of residence is made. Oliver now succeeds to an uncle's property at Ely. Sir Thomas Steward, Knight, his mother's brother, has made him his principal heir, and he will no longer watch over cattle in the bogs of St. Ives, or walk through the narrow lanes, or along the banks of the black river Ouse.

He becomes a resident of a cathedral town. "His mother appears to have joined him at Ely ; she quitted Huntingdon, returns to her native place, an aged grandmother, was not, however, to end her days there."

Dugdale, one of the old vituperative writers, has an account of Oliver's joining in an attempt, in a court of law, to get lunacy proved against this uncle and to deprive him of the management of his property. The story of this "act of villainy" on Oliver's part is no more credible than Dr. Bates's surgical operation story, which has been related in another chapter. The court, Dugdale says, decided against Oliver, and the uncle continued to manage his own property. Sir Thomas Steward was a lunatic, if after such treatment from his nephew he made him his chief heir, which he did.

These royalist aspersions, so often referred to, it may be are getting to be wearisome to the reader ; but the writer feels compelled to give the Stuart historians, so far as is possible, a full and fair showing. The reproduction of some charges which they brought against Cromwell would be indeed unbecoming. We want no concealment except where it is necessary. It is due to Oliver's memory that the views of his contem-



poraries, and of such later adverse writers as we have room for, should be distinctly brought out in this book. We therefore quote from "Cromwelliana," a passage alluded to before, relating to this Steward property, and which reflects in other particulars on Oliver's character. "This, our Oliver," says the remarkable book, which contains extracts from more than a hundred newspapers, published during the civil wars, "this, our Oliver, was of Mr. Robert Cromwell, a gentleman who went no less in esteem and reputation than any of his ancestors, for his personal worth, until his unfortunate production of this his son and heir, whom he had by his wife Elizabeth Steward, a niece of Sir Thomas Steward, a gentleman of competent fortune in this county, but of such a malignant effect on the course of this his nephew's life, that, if all the lands he gave him (as some were fenny ground) had been irrecoverably lost, it might have passed for a good Providence, and happy prevention of those ruins he caused in the three kingdoms. For that estate continued him here, after his debauchery had wasted and consumed his own patrimony, and diverted him from a resolution of going into New England, the Harbour of non-conformists, which design, upon his sudden and

miraculous conversion, first to a civil and religious deportment, and thence to a sour puritanism he straitwith abandoned ; by the former repentance he gained the good will and affection of the orthodox clergy, who, by their persuasions and charitable insinuations, wrought him into Sir Robert Steward's favor, insomuch that he declared him his heir to an estate of five hundred pounds a year ; by his second change to non-conformity and scrupulous sanctity, he gained the estimation and favor of the faction ; some of the heads whereof, viz., Mr. Hampden and Master Goodwin, procured him the match with a kinswoman of theirs, Mistress Elizabeth Boucher aforesaid, the daughter of Sir James Boucher ; and afterward got him chosen a burgess for Cambridge, by their interest in that town, which was totally infected with Puritanism and Zealotry, and this was his first projection and design of ambition, besides that it privileged him from arrests, his estate being sunk again, and not to be repaired but by the general ruin."

We had copied this extract from "*Cromwelliana*" (published at Westminster, 1810), when to our joy we found that the passage was from Heath. This is our first sight of anything from Carrion Heath who, it will be remembered, Carlyle says

was the chief fountain from which later historians drew their supplies. The passage is a curious one and suggests analyzing, but we let it stand without comment, so that the haters of Cromwell may have the full benefit of it.

While living at Ely and still a farmer, at the age of thirty-nine, Oliver wrote a pious letter to his cousin, Mrs. St. John, in reply to a letter from her which evidently contained some rather flattering and pleasant expressions, called forth by a visit lately paid to her. Oliver writes : "Truly no poor creature hath more cause to put himself forth in the cause of God than I. I have had plentiful wages beforehand, and I am sure I shall never earn the least mite. The Lord accept me in his Son, and give me to walk in the light" . . . "blessed be his name for shining upon so dark a heart as mine. You know what my manner of life hath been. Oh! I lived in and loved darkness, and hated the light. I was a chief, the chief of sinners. This is true, I hated godliness, yet God had mercy on me. Oh! the riches of his mercy."

Carlyle thus comments on this letter : "Rev. Mark Noble, my reverend imbecile friend, discovers in this letter clear evidence that Oliver was once a very dissolute man; that Carrion

Heath spake truth in that Flagellum balderdash of his. O, my reverend imbecile friend! had'st thou thyself never any moral life, but only a sensitive and digestive? Thy soul never longed toward the serene heights, all hidden from thee, and thirsted as the hart in dry places, where no water be? It was never a sorrow to thee that the eternal pole star had gone out, veiled itself in dark clouds; a sorrow only that this or the other noble patron forgot thee when a living fell vacant." So much for Mark Noble, who brought out his book on Cromwell in 1787.

Again: "O, modern reader! dark as this letter may seem, I will advise thee to make an attempt toward understanding it. There is in it a tradition of humanity worth all the rest. Indisputable certificate that man once had a soul; that man once walked with God, his life a sacred island girdled with the Eternities and Godheads. Was it not a time for heroes? Heroes were then possible." . . . "Yes, there is a tone in the soul of this Oliver that holds of the Perennial. With a noble sorrow, with a noble patience, he longs toward the mark of the prize of the high calling. He, I think, has chosen the better part." . . . "Annihilation of self" . . . "casting yourself at the footstool of God's throne to

live or die forever ; as Thou wilt, not as I will.”  
. . . “Brother, had'st thou never in any form  
such moments in thy history? Thou knowest  
them not even by credible rumor? Well, thy  
earthly path was peaceabler, I suppose. But  
the highest was never in thee ; the highest will  
never come out of thee.”

The later domestic life of Oliver can be best  
told and understood, after we have related his  
career as a warrior and a ruler.

## CHAPTER V.

### WARRIOR.

CARLYLE collected the Cromwell letters and speeches, and made elucidations on them, with a view to a history of the English Revolution of the seventeenth century ; but he left his work as it now stands, a remarkable mixture ; conglomerations such as no historian before him ever attempted, or, probably, in the future, ever will attempt ; a mixed mass, illuminated however, scintillated, we may say, by his unparalleled genius.

On one page we have a picture of a battle, on the next page a letter from Oliver to his wife. Here we have a letter to a daughter, and in close proximity an account of the Irish war. Within a space of six pages we find a letter to " Dick Norton," a record of the king's execution, a

soldier's pass, a letter to Mayor about Richard's marriage, an order of the Council of State and a request for lending out some books from the St. James's Library. This want of arrangement makes it difficult to keep the historical parts of the work connected and clear in the mind ; but at the same time it gives a peculiar interest to the narrative.

It has occurred to the writer, instead of following the plan of Carlyle's book, to separate the materials collected from it, and from other sources, and to make a chapter in connection with the civil war, to be followed by a chapter on Oliver's connection with the Parliament, and the offer of kingship. Oliver's place in Parliament was not prominent prior to the war ; and for that reason, too, it will be best to trace his course as a soldier before telling the story of his life in connection with the Government. The two lives, that of a warrior and that of a statesman are, it is true, contemporaneous ; but a clearer view of the man will be secured by separating, in our account of him, his course in the war from his course in legislation.

It has been remarked by an English historian, that the attempt of Charles I. to seize the five members of his Parliament for imprisonment, in

the year 1642, was undoubtedly the real cause of the civil war ; but this fatal action on the king's part was only the culmination of a tyranny which had long exasperated the people of England, and was rather the immediate occasion of the outbreak than the real ground of it.

The causes of the great contest may be traced far back into the reign of Queen Elizabeth ; they were augmented by the atrocities of the government of James I., and they became more and more intolerable during the eleven years when Charles I. governed the country without legislation, violating his most sacred promises, and reducing his subjects to a condition of servitude, both as regards their political rights and their religious liberties.

Opposition to the Government, through legislation, was not attempted in the time of Henry VIII., though the Parliament met nearly every year ; and it was feeble all through the years of Elizabeth's rule in the few Parliaments which were called by this queen. In that of 1576, she gave the Commons to understand that she would rule the pulpits of the church, and she prohibited Puritan conventicles. But little effort was made to interfere with her prerogative ; but at that early period there were complaints that a few



persons about the court were made rich at the expense of honest merchants who secured no royal favor. Puritanism broke out in the Parliament of 1581, in the person of Paul Wentworth, and his bill for a "Fast for the House," and "Sermons," was carried by a majority of fifteen; but Elizabeth, the day after the passage of the bill, sent word that she did not approve of such proceedings, and she called for the rescinding of the resolution. The Parliament yielded to her voice of authority.

Froude tells us that the Episcopal Church might not have been saved but for the young Puritans; that without the support of the Puritans Elizabeth would have "changed her palace for a prison, and her scepter for a distaff;" that "through all her trials" (touching the Church of Rome) "they had been true as steel." But the time came, during her reign, when the Puritans were persecuted; when Penry was hanged, and Udal condemned to die in prison.

No strong opposition, however, was made against Elizabeth, nor was opposition to the Government in James's time at all commensurate with the injustice which marked the king's government. The day of triumph for the Puritans came at last; and it came with vengeance;

with crime, according to the royalists, unequalled in the annals of history; with a death-sentence passed on an anointed, sacred king; came, said John Milton and other Puritans, said Cromwell and the fifty-eight judges with him, as an act of justice due to freemen, whose rights had been trampled on for fifty years and more, and as an act of mercy to future generations of Englishmen.

It is pertinent here to say that Cromwell had but little share with those who brought about the civil war. He took no part in the debates preceding the time when Charles left Whitehall. The opposition of Eliot, Pym and others to the Government began long before he had a seat in St. Stephen's Hall. Though on committees, soon after the Parliament of 1640 met, there is no proof that he was looked on as a man who would be likely to take a prominent place in the affairs of the nation. His cousin Hampden knew what was in him, knew him to be a man of power; but others were ignorant of that fact. When it was decided that there must be a war, he offered his services simply as a recruiting officer.

One is inclined to wonder that patience and inaction lasted so long; to wonder that resistance to



OLIVER CROMWELL.  
*(From a portrait in the Louvre.)*



prerogative did not earlier take a more aggressive and violent form; that the Puritans, when Charles declared, soon after he was crowned, that Parliaments were wholly in his power, to be or not to be, did not attempt to hurl him from his throne. But the time was not yet ripe; it was needed that promise after promise should be violated; that oppression should succeed oppression; that perfidy should again and again be followed by a semblance of repentance; that the Star Chamber should overwhelm with terror, and then mutilate and imprison those whose only crimes were an aversion to ritualism, and the practice of a simple worship which they loved; that the people should wait through long years of tyranny, until the king had entered St. Stephen's Hall with armed followers, to arrest members of the Commons, and had gone to York to raise an army to enforce his rights, or what he deemed his rights. And even then the Puritans did not begin the contest until efforts to bring back the king had failed; and if at any time during the seven years which intervened between his leaving Whitehall and his death, three of which years were spent in war, while no small part of the remaining four were spent in negotiations, Charles had been willing to drop

the one word prerogative from his vocabulary, Puritans would have welcomed him to the throne. He began the war for prerogative, and for that only. The war transferred the Government to the Parliament, but the Government, after the king was completely beaten, still made earnest efforts to restore him, with an abated prerogative, Cromwell himself aiding; but duplicity, treachery, and clinging to prerogative, at last destroyed the monarchy, and changed England into a Commonwealth.

It was on the sixth of January, 1642, that the abortive attempt to seize Pym, Hampden and others was made. Four days later the king left Whitehall, abandoning London and the Parliament. It was now evident that civil war must come, and as soon as that was decided London began to supply the Parliament with funds. In that city, within a single day, four thousand men were enlisted to fight, if need be, against their king. Citizens offered their plate and women their jewelry.

Six months pass before we hear of Cromwell. He does not appear until July. In that month "Mr. Cromwell" moves in the House of Commons "to allow the townsmen of Cambridge to raise two companies of volunteers, and to appoint

captains over them." The next month it appears that "Mr. Cromwell" has seized the magazine in the Castle of Cambridge, and hath hindered the carrying of the plate from the University for the service of the king. Before the month is ended he is Captain Cromwell; captain of "Troup Sixty-seven." And now begins, at the age of forty-three, the life of our hero as a warrior. A farmer member of Parliament for the first time finds himself in military dress, with a sword, and expected to do a kind of work of which he is ignorant.

A month later, on the twenty-third of October, he is in Edgehill battle. The battle decides nothing; but while it is going on, Oliver makes a discovery which was to make him and the army, which he afterward commanded, world famous. He discovers that the soldiers with whom he had met the king's army were not of the kind which will bring success. The men on the royal side are men of honor, gentlemen who have a deep interest in the result; the men secured on the side of the Parliament are "a set of poor tapsters," and "town apprentices." This will never do, he thinks; and then he suggests to his cousin Hampden that men of religion, and men who have a conscientious interest in the issue of the

struggle, shall be enlisted. Hampden seems to see that the idea is a good one, but rather impracticable. Oliver still thinks it is practicable. At any rate, he will try to put it into effect. He does try, and he succeeds.

The army, which after a time he raises, becomes the most remarkable one to be found in the annals of Anglo-Saxon history; the most memorable that ever fought an English battle. Cromwell could truly say, after it had done its work, that it was never beaten. It was made up chiefly of men of religion. No hard drinking was permitted in it; no oath could be heard without a fine. It was, perhaps, the first army in which violence to women after victory was unknown. It went into battle praying, and it sang the songs of David on the field in the intervals of slaughter. "The Lord of Hosts" was its battle-cry. It received and it deserved the name of Ironsides. It was an army which raised England to a position in Europe which before she had not held, and which she ceased to hold when the Protectorate was over. It not only crushed the armies of Charles I. and Charles II., but it was feared in France, in Spain, in Africa and at Rome. The mere dread of it arrested the awful slaughter of Protestants



by the Duke of Savoy in the valley of Lucerne; stopped the regiments of Louis XIV. when on their march to Nismes to punish and expel the Huguenots of that city, and so frightened was the Pope that he started processions through the streets of Rome in order to avert its power. It made England unattackable, and the arbiter of European nations.

During the winter of 1643-44, Oliver was employed in the eastern counties, in forming an association for defense; a work which secured those counties all through the war from invasions of the royal army. In the month of March he receives the title of colonel; and in the Fen country, with his regiment of horse, he stands ready to "disperse royalist assemblages, to keep down disturbance, and care in every way that the Parliament cause suffer no damage."

In May he has a successful skirmish at Grantham, and soon after he raises the siege of Croyland. In July he wins a victory at Gainsborough; performs "very gallant service," and reports thus: "The honor of this retreat" (of the enemy) "belongs to God." It was at this time that his name began to be talked about. Gainsborough was the beginning of "his great fortunes." In August the Earl of Manchester

accepts the control of the Eastern Association, and, a little later, Oliver became his second in command. In October Cromwell was in the Winceby fight, and came near to death. His horse was killed, and he was thrown to the ground; as he rose, he was attacked and "knocked down" by a royalist. He regained his feet, mounted the horse of a soldier, made a charge, and routed the enemy. "My Lord of Manchester did not get up till the battle was over."

In the early part of the next year, 1644, the Scots, seemingly not thankful to King Charles for what, with Archbishop Laud's help, he had done for them in the matter of bishops, entered England with an army of twenty thousand men to join the Parliament forces; and, a few months later, "Prince Rupert, with some twenty thousand fierce men, came pouring over the hills toward York, where a royal force of six thousand men were besieged by these Scots, under Lesley, joined by the forces under Lords Fairfax and Manchester, and Cromwell."

We have now reached Marston Moor, and it is necessary to say that no attempt will be made to describe the battles in which our hero was engaged. We would hardly wish to retouch a painting made by a great master. As space

allows, limited quotations are made, but there will be no attempt to reproduce the pictures of Basing Hall and Dunbar, or other battle scenes which Carlyle has so graphically described.

The battle of Marston Moor, "the bloodiest of the whole war," was fought July 2, 1644, between seven and ten o'clock in the evening; "the most enormous hurly-burly of fire and smoke and steel flashings and death tumult ever seen in those regions" — "four thousand one hundred and fifty bodies to be buried, and total ruin to the king's affairs in those northern parts." "The Prince of Plunderers" (Rupert), "invincible hitherto, here first tasted the steel of Oliver's Ironsides, and did not in the least like it." York was taken, and Rupert "fled across into Lancashire to recruit again."

A few months later, on the twenty-seventh of October, came the second battle of Newbury, which was to produce a very important change in the management of the war. Manchester refused to follow the king when he was retiring from the field. The contest of four hours had terminated rather to the advantage of the Parliament army, and just that opportunity was presented which the Ironsides needed for a victory. Cromwell urged Manchester to give the order for an advance.

Manchester refused, and it became evident to Oliver that he was afraid of beating His Majesty thoroughly. Twelve days later, when the king was taking supplies into Denington Castle, Oliver urged his superior officer to permit an attack to be made. Again Manchester refused. About two weeks after this disagreement between these officers, on the twenty-fifth of November, Lieut.-Gen. Cromwell, in his place in Parliament, brought a charge against the earl, "that he hath always been indisposed and backward to engagements, and the ending of the war by the sword" — "that he hath drawn the army into, and detained them in such a position as to give the enemy fresh advantages."

There was some talk of prosecuting Oliver; but instead of lodging him in the Tower, the "Self Denying Ordinance" was passed, and a "New Model" for the army was made. This change called for the retirement of all officers who were members of the Parliament, including Cromwell, from military service; but it was immediately seen that exceptions must be made, and Cromwell continued to hold a place as general. Sir Thomas Fairfax now became the superior officer, and "to him it is clear" that Oliver "cannot be dispensed with." Fairfax

and his officers petition Parliament that Oliver be retained, and the Commons, "somewhat more readily than the Lords, continued by installments of forty days, then of three months, his services in the army, and at length grew to regard him as a constant element there." "To Cromwell himself there was no overpowering felicity in getting out to be shot at, except where wanted; he very probably, as Sprigge intimates, did let the matter in silence take its own course." To the present writer, no part of Cromwell's public life, so far as his pure and lofty character is involved, is more significant than that which is now before us. It was the highest kind of patriotism which led him to impeach Manchester, and to favor the expulsion from the army of all officers who were members of the Parliament. It was not only a dangerous thing, which counted but little with such a man, but it was a project which was not unlikely to retire him to a private life.

The newspapers of the day, and the letters in "Cromwelliana," indicate more than the possibility of Oliver's excluding himself from the army and forever depriving himself of the opportunity of becoming distinguished, and of losing, what loyalists say he from the first was aiming after, his own elevation to supreme power.

There is not space in this little book for an exposition of the famous "Self Denying Ordinance;" but we quote from "*Mercurius Britannicus*" and from Fairfax in order to show how Fairfax and his officers felt in regard to the necessity of keeping Oliver for the successful prosecution of the war.

The "*Mercurius Britannicus*" says: "It was ordered that Cromwell continue with the army three months, after the fifty days assigned him are expired. I cannot believe that any will re-pine at so necessary an order." The "*Modern Intelligence*" says, "It were to be wished he were in the army." Another report says, "The House fell into debate of that ever honored and thrice valiant and religious Lieut.-Gen. Cromwell, whose time, limited by both houses, is almost expired, and thereupon the House of Commons passed an ordinance for enlarging and adding the space of four months to continue his command as lieutenant-general, notwithstanding the 'Self Denying Ordinance,' and ordered to send to the Lords for their concurrence." Probably a letter from Fairfax settled this matter and secured Oliver as a permanent officer in the army.

Fairfax wrote to the Parliament as follows: "The general esteem and affection which he

hath, both with the officers and soldiers of this whole army, his own personal worth and ability for the employment, his great care, diligence, courage and faithfulness in the services you have already employed him in . . . make us look upon it as the duty we owe to you and the public, to make it our humble request and earnest wish . . . to appoint him unto this employment." This letter is more than a tribute to Cromwell; it reflects, at the distance of more than two centuries, a beautiful light on Sir Thomas Fairfax, his officers and his soldiers.

It is the view of Gardiner, the historian, that Oliver "supported the first Self Denying Ordinance with the real intention of abandoning his position in the army."

The next encounter which our hero had with the enemy, was on June 14, 1645, at Naseby. He can now fight under no limitations. Prince Rupert is again to meet him. The king is present or near the battle ground. It was the last battle in the field for Charles, and his forces were "shivered to atoms." Two days before this conflict, Cromwell arrived from the Eastern Association and was received "amid shouts from the whole army."

On the morning of the conflict he had the

ordering of the horse. When the battle began Prince Rupert "charged up hill and carried all before him," and then galloped off to plunder. Cromwell on the other wing, charged down hill carrying all before him, and "did not gallop off the field to plunder." The prince returns from his plundering episode to find the king's infantry a ruin, and after a useless effort his cavalry are broken and flee. They left behind them the king's carriage with the famous cabinet containing letters which have made some noise in the world. Of this Naseby battle Cromwell wrote to the Parliament, "This is no other but the hand of God, and to him alone belongs the glory, wherein none are to share with him."

No hope now remained for the royalist army, though a few places were still held for the king. Before the end of 1645, there were taken Bristol, Winchester, Basing House and Denington Castle. The first civil war was ended.

We shall preserve the continuity of Cromwell's military history, passing for the present most of the events of three years, comprised in the interval between the defeat of Charles I. and the attempt of Charles II. to restore royalty. This attempt was made in 1648. Both Wales and Scotland in the summer of that year made prep-



arations for another war. The king is still living, and negotiations with him are still going on, though three years have passed since his last battle. On the announcement of the movement in Wales, Cromwell takes his army there and spends a little more than two months, quells the disturbance, so far as he can within that limited time, and in July starts toward Scotland to undertake a far more difficult enterprise than the reduction of Wales.

The Scots had voted an army of forty thousand men for the overthrow of Parliament, and this force, or half of it, is ready to invade England. Prince Charles, with such prospects of aid in sight, takes passage with a fleet, anchors in Yarmouth Harbor, and from thence issues orders for Loudon to join him, which orders Loudon disregards. He crossed the Channel in July.

On the twentieth of the following month, Oliver, at his writing-table in Warrington, is giving the Parliament a long and minute account of Preston battle. A day of thanksgiving is appointed for the victory, and the prince with his fleet can sail back to Holland. The prisoners and the slain after the battle of Preston outnumbered the Parliament army. There were twenty-one thousand men on the royal side; Cromwell

had about eight thousand six hundred men, but the Ironsides were among them.

After the defeat of the Scotch royalists, Cromwell with his army moves on to Edinburgh, where he was well received by Argyle and the Scots party, which was not in sympathy with royalty.

The time is now near when the king is to die ; but of this tragedy it is unnecessary at present to say anything, except that on the death of his father Prince Charles assumed the title of King.

We must now follow Cromwell to Ireland and as briefly as possible dispose of the Irish war, keeping in mind that the vindication of our hero, and not history, is the chief object of the present book. At the time of the arrival of the English army at Dublin, the Duke of Ormond had united the various Irish parties and they had invited Prince Charles to come to their island and be crowned ; while at the same time Scotland, on certain conditions, is ready to receive the prince as its king. Charles, then, has the opportunity, such as it is, to choose between these two offers ; and whichever offer is accepted, the purpose is to place the prince, if possible, on the English throne. Here, then, are two games to be played for the crown ; the first in Ireland, the second in

Scotland. Both were played, and in both the prince was the loser.

It was in August, 1649, that the English fleet entered Dublin Harbor; and before September was gone the Irish game was nearly decided — certainly all hope for Charles from that island was extinguished before the Parliament army left it.

Our present interest relates exclusively to Cromwell and his cause in Ireland. Banishment of war prisoners was a custom for which Parliament was responsible, and it is unfair that the name of one commander should be branded with infamy for a practice that was a common one in his age, and which continued into the eighteenth century. As to the storming of towns, the accounts do not agree. Some loyalists acquit him of guilt; others have stained his name by charging him with needless cruelties.

Cromwell himself claims that he did no wrong or injustice to any inhabitant of the island. He claims this in his "Declaration to the Irish Bishops." He claims it too in a letter which he sent to the "Commander in Rosse," on the seventeenth of October, 1649. The letter may be read in "Cromwelliana." He wrote, "Since my coming into Ireland, I have this witness for myself, that I have endeavored to avoid effusion

of blood, having been before no place to which such terms have not been sent as might have turned to the good and preservation of those to whom they were offered." That Cromwell believed not only that he was doing what was right, but that God blessed him in his work, there can be no doubt. His private letters, written in Ireland, prove this.

We quote from one letter : "Only this let me say, which is the best intelligence to friends who are truly Christian ; the Lord is pleased still to vouchsafe us his presence, and to prosper his own work in our hands ; which to us is more eminent because, truly, we are a company of poor weak worthless creatures. Truly our work is neither from our own brains, nor from our courage and strength ; but we follow the Lord, who goeth before, and gather what he scattereth, that so all may appear to be from him." Another thing is worth recording. If Cromwell had possessed that unscrupulous, unprincipled ambition, which nearly all royalist writers have attributed to him, he would not have gone to Ireland, he would have remained in London and watched there the course of events. There was nothing for him to gain in the Irish campaign ; there was only duty to be done.

When the work in Ireland was so far accomplished that it could be left with safety, Cromwell sailed for England, where he arrived in May, 1650.

Prince Charles's prospects from the Irish side are now gone, but hope rises for him in Scotland. He reached Edinburgh about the time of Oliver's arrival in London. He was made king of the Scots, and was also proclaimed king of England. This was mainly the work of the Presbyterian Calvinistic party. The terms of this kingship were: subscriptions to the rigid doctrines of the "Covenant," acknowledgment of his father's tyranny, and acknowledgment of his mother's idolatry. The men of Marston Moor, who had fought for the Parliament in that battle, now stand pledged to Charles as their king, and are willing to fight to place this useless scion of Scotch royalty on the English throne. It is evident that Oliver has more war work before him.

The young prince did not at all like the terms which were offered him; but he could not evade them. He is said to have recoiled at the thought of confessing his mother an idolatress; but yet, that being one of the conditions insisted on by the pious party, he signed the compact.

And now we see an army of praying men,

controlled largely by ministers of the gospel, and mingled with them a few men not so used to prayers as oaths; and over this army float the banners of the Stuarts. It is to meet at Dunbar another army of praying men — the Ironsides. Now, if ever, with such a gathering of Calvinists, Presbyterians, Independents, and royalist churchmen, is the time for that bright star of courtesy, with which poetry decks war; and after the battle that star did shine a little, but not before.

Lord Fairfax, who has been for some years the nominal commander of the English forces, though urged by the Council of State and by Cromwell to lead the army against the Scots, declines to do so, influenced, it is said, by his wife. And now Cromwell becomes, for the first time, "Commander-in-Chief." His title is changed, but nothing more. He has long been the supreme man in England.

It was on the twenty-sixth of June, 1650, that our hero was made the chief commander of the army. Three days later he was on his way to the North. In August his tents are pitched within sight of Edinburgh. For the intricate movements about that city, the letters which were exchanged between the belligerents, the difficult

position into which the Parliament army was forced, we have not space in this work. The reader must go to Carlyle if he would have light on these matters ; and to Carlyle he must go, as intimated before, if he wishes to read the account of the Dunbar battle, the most graphic piece of war history, perhaps, to be found in the English language.

By the second of September, failing to bring the commander, David Lesley, to an engagement, and needing supplies, Oliver's army has been forced to take a position at Dunbar, fifteen miles from Edinburgh, and a mile or two from the sea. The army is inclosed there between the heaths and mountains. Some ships are at anchor in the bay, but they can be of no present service. Cromwell's men are dying fast from disease. In these desperate circumstances, like the true, unselfish man that he was, on the second of September he writes to the governor of New-castle these noble words: "Whatever becomes of us, it will be well for you to get what forces you can together, and the South to help you what it can." Whatever becomes of us, let the war go on.

David Lesley follows Cromwell to Dunbar, and on the evening before the battle his soldiers,

descending from a hill, were placed in a position which gave Oliver hope. Lesley thinks that Oliver is lost. Oliver, seeing the disposition which Lesley is making of his troops, believes that he is not lost. The Scotch commander, who on the morning of the third expected that Cromwell and his army would be extinguished, in the afternoon of that day was back in Edinburgh, with leisure for reflection. His force had been about twenty thousand men ; Oliver's about half that number.

Cromwell's letter to the Parliament, dated the fourth, reports two hundred colors taken, all the artillery, fifteen thousand arms, near ten thousand prisoners, and about three thousand slain. He writes, "I do not believe we have lost twenty men ;" and at the time of writing he had not heard of one commissioned officer lost. He further writes, "Since we came in Scotland, it hath been our desire and longing to have avoided blood in this business." No doubt of that, but Charles Stuart must be kept out of England, if it does cost some Calvinistic and Presbyterian blood to do it. It was, also, on the fourth, the day after the battle, that he wrote a touching letter (quoted elsewhere) to his wife, telling her that she was "dearer to him than any creature."



Soon after the battle of Dunbar, Cromwell fixes his quarters at Edinburgh. Charles is at Sterling, where it is impossible to reach him. The army which had been destroyed at Dunbar was made up of men whose death the king is said not to have regretted, because they were Presbyterians; they fought for him, many of them had died for him, but they were Calvinists, who had forced him to listen to theological discussion, and at last to accept their covenant, which he hated. From Lesley's army those who, naturally, most sympathized with the king were, so far as possible, excluded; but among the parties in Scotland was one which had no affiliation whatever with the Presbyterians, and from that party Charles succeeded in creating another army.

This new army Cromwell had no opportunity to meet. It was impossible for him to ascend the hill on which the Castle of Sterling stands. The winter and the spring, therefore, passed away without any general battle. When summer came the king had his choice of retreating to the North with this new army, where it would be next to impossible for the Parliament army to encounter him, or to venture into England. Cromwell placed his army, either from necessity

or by design, in such a position that the way to England was open. Charles chose that way, expecting, doubtless, that his force would be increased as he advanced southward, and that he would be able not only to secure a defensive position, but also to destroy the army of the Parliament. Except on such a supposition, his course must be regarded as a wild and desperate one. The people of England did not, however, flock to his standard. One or two attempts were made to aid him, but they failed.

In his march of three hundred miles through the heart of England less than two thousand men joined him.

It has often been said that the Puritans were a minority of the people; if so, the royalists showed lack of spirit in refusing to come to the succor of the king. Instead of being able, by increasing his numbers, to make a stand and fight a battle, Charles was forced to march southward to Worcester. Cromwell followed him at a distance; and as he advanced recruits came in from all quarters, so that he had, on reaching Worcester, thirty thousand men, an army superior in number to any which he had before commanded; and which, it has been reported, could be increased, if necessary, to over

one hundred thousand men. The indications are that the cause of the Parliament was more popular, even outside the eastern counties, than that of the king.

The result of the battle of Worcester might easily have been foreseen. The position held by the royal army was, indeed, very strong, and it required more strategic work to overthrow it than Cromwell had yet undertaken; but it was inevitable, situated as Charles was, that he should be beaten. It was but a question of time. One rather wonders, when the defeat of the king might be made absolutely certain by the vast army which surrounded the little city, that Cromwell, as old writers tell us, "did exceedingly hazard himself riding up and down in the midst of the fire." His reputation for courage was established, and yet he puts himself where a bullet might make an end of those dark, ambitious schemes, which royalists assure us were then, and even earlier, covered over and concealed by his hypocrisy. It was his purpose, in that Worcester battle, to do his duty regardless of personal consequences. He thought no more of future place and power than the meanest soldier who fought under him. He could, probably, have gone from that Worcester battle to a throne, but

his sole object in it was to keep Charles Stuart out of England.

The battle was fought on the third of September, 1651, one year from the day of Dunbar. The fighting on both sides was bravely done. Charles, says one report, watched the first part of the engagement from the top of the cathedral; and then, at what he thought an opportune moment, descended to join in it. But what could he do against Cromwell and the Ironsides? Nothing. His Sacred Majesty can only escape—flee to the oak-tree for a hiding place, and, finally, to the Continent; but “fourteen thousand other men, sacred too, after a sort, though not Sacred Majesties, did not escape; one could weep for such a death, for brave men, in such a cause.” This was the last of Cromwell’s battles; he is soon to begin another kind of warfare.

If in this country, as in France, it were the custom to recognize, by public monuments, heroes who in their day were misrepresented or neglected, Oliver Cromwell, long since, would have stood on many of our public squares to represent a warrior who fought only for duty, and to secure for Englishmen, and for the colonists of New England, the blessings of civil and religious liberty.

## CHAPTER VI.

### PARLIAMENT AND KINGSHIP.

OLIVER was a member of the Parliament of 1628. He was now twenty-nine years old, and represented Huntingdon, his native place. This was the third Parliament of Charles I., and the first in which Oliver sat. It met in March, and continued its sessions, with one interruption, for a year.

England was now awake to the enormities of the Government, and so fully awake that the Speaker of the House, who was ordered by the king not to put to vote a question involving the people's liberties, was held by force in his chair until the vote could be taken. The vote was passed by acclamation, the king's usher standing meanwhile outside the door of the House. The men responsible for this proceeding paid the

penalty of it by imprisonment ; it would hardly be unjust to say that one of them, Sir John Eliot, for his share in it, was murdered in the Tower by Charles I.

Oliver, a young farmer fresh from the country, looked, we may suppose, with some surprise on this scene. It was something new in English history. In the time of Henry VIII., or in Elizabeth's time it would not have been possible for subjects, in that way, to insult anointed majesty. But it was done in Charles's Parliament, and done, so far as we know, without help from Oliver. The scene was a part of his education. He saw the king, not at bay, but near it, "struggling much to be composed, but yet writhing with royal rage."

Just before the session closed, and near the end of its year, the member for Huntingdon rose to his feet and said that his old schoolmaster, Dr. Beard, had told him that Dr. Alabaster "had preached flat popery at Saint Paul's Cross." It certainly was not much of a speech which the new member made ; and it may as well be remarked here, as elsewhere, that Oliver, unlike most men who have ability, was not fond of making speeches. Later on, after the wars, he was able to make very long speeches, but he never

liked the business, and he always spoke extemporaneously ; further, he never took the least pains to have what writers took down corrected and preserved. A great man more oblivious to literary reputation has never lived ; yet he was a strong writer. Some of his war letters, which he felt it his duty to write to the Parliament, are very ably written.

The episode of Denzil Holles, John Selden, Sir John Eliot and others, made an end of the famous Parliament of 1628, which sat till March, 1629, and then Oliver went back to his farming.

About eleven years later, the king having ruled alone, or with Wentworth's and Laud's assistance, in the interval, Oliver is sent by the town of Cambridge to the Parliament of April 13, 1640. That Parliament continued for only three weeks.

His Majesty has on his hands what has been called the "Bishop's War," a war to force surplices and other ecclesiastical appendages on the Scots. Failing to get money from the Parliament for this purpose, His Majesty dismissed the members and decided to raise the needed funds by "forced loans, or how he could." The Scots, under these circumstances, conclude not to wait for the king's army to enter Scotland, but to enter England with their army.

The two armies meet near Newcastle ; the English army, seemingly not so much interested in the Episcopal mission as the king, shows but little inclination to fight, does a little fighting and marches southward to York. The Scots then take possession of the north of England and hold it for about a year. The Puritans looked on them as their saviors. Ballad singers in the streets of London sang their praises. The king and Laud lament to find the Scots so indifferent to religion.

Again a Parliament is summoned ; the most famous, the most infamous, of all the Parliaments in the records of English history. It met on the third of November, 1640. To this Long Parliament Oliver is sent to represent again the town of Cambridge ; and he continues a member of it while serving in the army, and up to the hour when he dissolved it, twelve years later, on the morning of April 20, 1653.

For more than twelve years, doing good work and bad work, and toward the end only bad work, it sat until compelled to sit no longer. But the good which it accomplished far exceeded the evil ; to it and to what grew out of it, England is indebted, in our day, to the gracious speeches which are made by the Queen to her Parliaments.



Prerogative unlimited was doomed after 1640, as Charles and his brother James learned to their disappointment and humiliation.

In the Parliament of 1640, or rather in the early years of it, Cromwell was a silent member; but he was on many committees, and on one committee to which it is necessary to refer. He was on the committee appointed to look into the cases of the victims of tyranny.

The most délicaté and unpleasant part of the present writer's task is that which compels him to refer to his hero's opposition to the Episcopal Church. Archbishop Laud was in the Tower. He was impeached by the Commons soon after the meeting of the Parliament. It does not appear that Cromwell took any part in the discussions which terminated so fatally for the head of the Church. He, certainly, was no more responsible for the needlessly cruel sentence than the members, a majority of the House, who voted for it; but he was, to a great degree, responsible for the temporary suspension of the kind of Episcopacy which Laud and the Star Chamber had enforced. Lenient in after life, he was not inclined to be so in 1641.

Perhaps the reader will find some excuse for him, if all the accessible facts are considered.

Trained as he had been in childhood, baptized himself, and having his children baptized, at Episcopal fonts; inclined, both from taste and from principle, to a simple form of worship; irritated, it is probable, by changes and innovations in the parish of Huntingdon of which Laud was made archdeacon, while he [Oliver] was yet a boy; inclined to freedom of conscience in matters of religion, it is hardly to be wondered at that he deviated from a right course touching the Church, and especially after his investigations as a member of the Parliament committee had shown that Prynne and Dr. Bastwick and the Rev. Mr. Burton had had their ears cropped, and their cheeks stamped with hot irons, and had been put into pillories, in Old Palace Yard, in sight of all who chose to see them, because they did not like Laud's system or his surplices. "It is too hot to last," said the Rev. Mr. Burton, as he was carried fainting to his house.

In addition to these matters you must recall what we may designate as Oliver's general ecclesiastical education; remember that he had been taught in his earlier years to hate papacy, and in later years to consider prelacy but another name for papacy, which he might naturally do when the archbishop soon after consecration was offered

a cardinal's hat by the Pope of Rome. It is true that Laud could not accept the offered cardinalship, but that he was a man to whom it could be offered was significant.

And what was Oliver's ecclesiastical education in his earlier life? To answer this question some things referred to in another chapter, must be repeated. It is not improbable that those who had lived in Mary's time had told him of Latimer and Ridley and Cranmer burned in the streets of Oxford; if not, he knew well enough the awful history of Mary's reign. It is quite possible that he had heard from eye-witnesses of the scene in the great square of Brussels, in 1568, when Horn and Egmont, champions of the Protestants, in sight of Spanish soldiers had their heads struck off by order of Alva's bloody council; if not, he had often read of the vast destruction of human lives in the Netherlands, which was going on a few years before he was born.

The Armada, composed of one hundred and twenty-nine vessels, which, with Parma's Antwerp fleet, it was hoped would land forty thousand men on the coasts of England only eleven years before his birth, had been sent by Philip of Spain to convert Episcopalians, then about

half the population of the country, into Roman Catholics — to convert them, if possible, by the sledge-hammer and fire processes which Alva had found ineffective twenty years before; which had proved a failure after a hundred thousand lives had been sacrificed, and an almost equal number driven to other lands.

The Gunpowder Plot, for blowing up whoever might happen to be in the Parliament House on the opening day — king, lords, churchmen and Puritans — was discovered on the eve of its execution, in November, 1605. Oliver, then six years old, would keep that story, often told at his father's fireside, in memory, and it would be sure to leave its mark on his character. Then came the cruel death of Henry, by Jesuits in Paris, and the commencement of the Protestant and Catholic thirty years' war.

In forming an opinion of Cromwell, so far as regards prelacy that came near to papacy, all these things should be remembered; and it should also be remembered that toleration was a blessing yet to be discovered in the middle of the seventeenth century. Cromwell, in 1641, was not tolerant. No king in Europe at that time was tolerant. When Protector he was probably the most tolerant ruler in the world. He did not

then interfere with Episcopalians or with Anabaptists so long as they kept to their legitimate work, and made no attempt to overthrow the Government. It was not the Church, but the minister who connected himself with politics and with the schemes of Charles, that he opposed.

Thurloe, in his "State Papers," has a letter to the States General, written by Beverning soon after the Protectorate began, in which it is stated that the Lord Protector "doth take a great deal of pains, and hath already spent much time about the affairs of the Church of England, to bring the same, by some toleration . . . into a peaceable condition to the content of all differing parties, and that the business is so far advanced that a meeting is, upon certain conditions agreed on, not under the name of a synod, but of a loving and Christian-like reception, where every one may propound for a mutual toleration. It is also firmly agreed on, that, to that end, the Bishops and Anabaptists shall be admitted into it, as well as the Independents and Presbyterians; but with this proviso, that they shall not dispute one another's principia but labor to agree in union."

The only important object had in view in the preparation of this book, was the vindication of

Cromwell; to show that he was a true man all through his life, honest in all his private and public acts. The stains which the writer wished to obliterate, or at least in part to remove, were connected with his opposition to the Church and his part in the king's death. The reader must judge whether or not he is vindicated touching the Church; he must certainly see that the provocation to put the Church out of the control of the Star Chamber Court was great enough to enlist the service of a pious and honorable man, and must also see that it was inevitable that Cromwell, with his education, should believe that a religious organization could be established better than that which the king and his bishops had controlled. Surely it is not difficult to attribute to him honest intentions, however much one may criticise his policy.

Three years passed between the time of Charles's defeat and his death, years of infinite confusion. The king fled from Oxford to the Scots. The Scots offer to fight for him if he will accept their covenant and sanction the Presbyterian worship. English Presbyterians will also join the Scots. The king refuses the offer. He hopes to get the Independents, of whom Cromwell was the chief, and the Presbyterians

to fighting among themselves; hopes to extirpate in this way the two great parties. Charles is still revered by all parties, and all would be glad to see him on the throne again. Oliver, as will soon appear, was most desirous to have him restored. Of the fate which awaited him no one thought or dreamed.

The Scots, a rather singular sort of people in those days, and much divided, failing to get the king to accept their form of religion, held Charles and finally virtually sold him to the Parliament, for four hundred thousand pounds. Charles goes back to England a prisoner, under escort of parliamentary commissioners. After a time the Independent party, which was in the main the army party, stole the king away from the Parliament or Presbyterian party, and the excuse for this act was, that the Presbyterians were likely to restore him without just and needed limitations.

These things were going on in the year 1646. In December of that year, Londoners sent up a petition to the Parliament asking that His Majesty may again be king. In the following February, Sir Thomas Fairfax, who was still the nominal commander-in-chief of the army, went northward to meet Charles, kissed his hand and then conducted him to Holmby. The limits of our book

confine us to the minimum of history ; only space is taken to give so much as will serve to make clear Oliver's position. He is rather an obscure figure during a greater part of the three years from 1646 to 1649. "The quarrel between city and army, . . . the split of Parliament into two clearly hostile parties of Presbyterian and Independents, the deadly wrestle of these two parties, with victory to the latter, all this transacts itself . . . without autographic note, or indisputable authentic utterances of Oliver's, to elucidate it for us." For a long time, so far as we can see, he simply watches from his place in the army, or in the Parliament, the course of events.

On June 2, 1647, Cornet Joyce, with five hundred troopers, appears at Holmby house "to the horror and despair of the Parliament Commissioners in attendance there, but clearly to the satisfaction of His Majesty ;" and with Cornet Joyce His Majesty rides off to Hinchinbrook, where Colonel Montague, now its owner, receives him. It was that same house in which, forty-four years before, Sir Oliver Cromwell had entertained King James, and where little Oliver, Sir Oliver's godchild, and little Charles, now the dis-crowned king, had probably played together.



Col. Whalley, who in after years was a protected regicide here in New England, was sent by Gen. Fairfax with a strong force to release the king and take him back to Holmby. Charles refuses the proffered aid; prefers to be a prisoner under the army rather than under the Parliament. He is taken to Hampton Court and there, though under surveillance, he is treated with respect, and with him negotiations are carried on with a view to his restoration.

Cromwell, month after month, visits him, establishes seemingly agreeable relations with him, and does what he can to persuade the king, whom he discovers to be an able man, to accept a modified Government. It soon, however, becomes apparent that it was not the purpose of Charles to be placed on the throne by Cromwell and the army. He has other plans concealed, he hopes, under his chicanery. While Oliver is visiting him, with danger to himself, for a part of the army begins to suspect their great leader of treachery, the king is playing a separate game of his own; a game which, if successful, would be fatal to the Puritans, and almost certain death to Oliver.

In November, 1647, he manages to escape from Hampton Court and get to the Isle of Wight; but there, where he hoped to be received

by the governor as a guest and to be protected, he finds himself again a prisoner.

When at Hampton Court "a plan of political reform," says Green in his "History of the English People," was presented to the king. "Relief and worship were to be free to all." "Acts enforcing the use of the Prayer Book, or attendance at church, or the enforcement of the covenant were to be repealed. Even Catholics were to be freed from the bondage of compulsory worship." "Cromwell . . . clung to the hope of accommodation with a passionate tenacity. His mind, conservative by tradition, and above all practical in temper, saw the political difficulties which would follow on the abolition of monarchy, and in spite of the king's evasions, he persisted in negotiating with him; but Cromwell stood almost alone."

It must be remembered that these efforts for the king's restoration were made after seven years of war; and certainly, if Green is correct in his statements, it would seem that the charges made so often against Cromwell, as ambitious for the throne, are wholly without foundation. Proofs that his ambition did not look in that direction, but only to a good government for England, will multiply as we go on.

Cromwell risking his life for the king, is a part of his history which royalist writers connect with duplicity. Hume, who can perhaps be believed in such a matter, says that during the negotiations at Hampton Court Charles offered the garter — the garter to Oliver ; the old branding-iron of St. Ives, with O. C. on it, at the moment of this offer, would have pleased Oliver better than all the garters which the king had at his disposal. Knightship, the future of his country being in the balance, was but a small thing to the man who, at a later time, could say that the crown was but “a feather in one’s cap.”

England is now in danger. All that has been done by Cromwell and the Puritans may be lost. The men who went into the struggle in 1640 in good faith, with half the country to support them, are likely to find themselves condemned to die. Hamilton, and men not of the Presbyterian type, have now got control of the Scotch Parliament ; and an army, not of the praying kind like that of Dunbar, is threatened. Charles, at the Isle of Wight, to give further evidence of his perfidy, signs a treaty with the Scots for an invasion of the kingdom ; and a new war, as parties then stood, would leave but little hope. Wales, too, with its Presbyterian colonels, is declaring for

royalism ; the country is in danger. What, then, shall Cromwell and his officers do under such circumstances ? Shall they die, or shall they kill the king ? That is the one personal question for them to decide in the year 1648. They, naturally, prefer not to die ; prefer that the king should die.

There were, of course, great interests pertaining to the nation to be considered ; but apart from all matters of national welfare, reducing the case to a personal one, it is difficult to see wherein the regicides are worthy of blame. Charles had played his desperate diplomatic game until the patience of Cromwell and his fellow Puritans was exhausted ; played it until there was a certainty either that the general of the army and other leaders in the war must lose all that they had fought for, and then give up their lives, or that the king must pay the penalty for his crimes. There was no other alternative in sight when the beginning of the year 1649 approached.

Long before the time of which we are writing, in the early part of 1648, there was held in Windsor Castle a prayer meeting such as never before and never since have those old walls echoed to. It was a prayer meeting of army officers.

It was continued into the third day. The "strongest heads and the strongest hearts" of England were in it. Strange as such a thing seems in this age, Lieut.-Gen. Cromwell was there, and did "press very earnestly," says one who was at the meeting, "on all there present, to a thorough consideration of our actions and of our ways, particularly, as private Christians, to see if any iniquity could be found in them, and what it was, that, if possible, we might find it out," etc. At the close of the meeting this decision was arrived at: "That it was our duty, if ever the Lord brought us back again in peace, to call Charles Stuart, that man of blood, to an account for the blood he had shed, and the mischief he had done to his utmost against the Lord's cause and people in these poor nations."

The polity of the Puritans was, possibly, defective. It might have been more judicious to retain the king a prisoner; but if ever capital punishment is just and right it was surely so in this case. The judges had to deal with a man who, after seventeen years of misrule, had committed a most brutal, savage-like act, by attacking the Parliament with hundreds of armed men at his back, and demanding the surrender of members to him, to be dealt with, doubtless, as

Eliot had been dealt with ; who then, a few days after this atrocity, fled from the members of the Commons who had been sent to St. Stephen's to make laws for their country ; who then, for the sake of prerogative and that only, had kept up a seven years' war ; who, as ruler, was incapable of telling the truth, or of keeping a treaty, or of governing justly ; a man, in a word, who had put himself outside the pale of mercy.

Cromwell, then, was a regicide. His name stands the third on the list of the fifty-nine signers of Charles's death warrant. Charles returns to Whitehall to die. Royalism all over Europe utters a shriek, "happily, at length, grown very faint in our day." The Puritans in England, and the Puritans in the colonies of New England, utter no shriek, but are, on the contrary, grateful to the daring men who have placed a king, whom they had known only as a despot, where he could no longer do them harm. Milton sang the praises of Cromwell, "the chief of men."

Not long after the death of Charles, in May, 1649, it was declared, after much debating in the Parliament, and consultations in committees, that England should be a Commonwealth.

Four years and more are now to pass before Oliver is named Protector. During a part of

this time he is occupied in carrying on the war in Ireland, and the Scotch war which terminated at Worcester, in September, 1651.

The interval between his last battle and the Protectorate included more than two years. At the beginning of this period it was impossible, after his victories in both the civil wars, also in the campaign in Ireland, and in the war with Scotland, that he should fail of recognition as the strongest, ablest man among Englishmen ; and, though he had been but little in the Parliament House, and had scarcely ever spoken there, it must also have been discovered that he had in him the elements of a statesman.

His return to London was a triumph rarely accorded to a conqueror. He was met by a committee of the Parliament at a distance from the city. Whitelocke, the eminent lawyer, was one of those who went out to meet him with congratulations. On entering the streets of London he is met by the Speaker of the House, by the Council of State, by sheriffs, mayors, and a vast multitude ; but he has the good sense to rightly estimate the worth of such a crowd, and is said to have remarked that more people would come out to see him hung. He is silent, for the most part, about himself, while he praises the soldiers who have

fought with him. One who looked on him in this scene, and who knew him well, is reported to have said, "This man will be king of England yet." The great conqueror is voted, for a home, Cardinal Woolsey's Hampton Court Palace, the residence of sovereigns from the time of Henry VIII. "This was the moment," says Frederick Harrison, "when a Bonaparte would have seized the vacant throne;" but "he betook himself to work as a simple member of the Council."

Ten years and more have now gone since as plain Mr. Cromwell he had offered to loan a part of his property for the service of the Commonwealth, and to undertake the dangerous business of recruiting soldiers in the town of Cambridge; and now, when his clear sight, his valor and his character have placed him at the head of the nation, and the Parliament had almost marked him for a supreme ruler, he goes to work as a common citizen, a committee member, hoping to aid in settling the Government; an exceptional man presenting a noble example.

It has not yet become popular to represent Cromwell on canvas, but the time will come when painters will abandon, for a while, the saints of mediæval times, and hang not a few Cromwell historical pictures on the walls of English



galleries. The frail beauties of Charles's court, who now smile on admiring crowds in Hampton Palace, will one day divide with the Protector, the Protectress, with Elizabeth Claypole and Puritan chiefs, the attention of English and American sightseers anxious to study the history of the seventeenth century.

Between the day of the Worcester battle and the breaking up of the Long Parliament, the records of Oliver's life are but few, and there are no letters of that time which throw new light on him; but it is well known that he was then constantly laboring for the settlement of the Government. Mr. Harrison has clearly explained his position during this period, and the present writer here avails himself of some of the statements of this author, rather than attempt to put into his own language what has been so lucidly set forth. He says that Cromwell did not bring himself "conspicuously before the nation;" that while "legally in control of the whole military forces" he "worked on at the administrative business," and "worked without display, accepting the shadowy authority of the remnant, or fag end, of the Long Parliament;" that he was "zealous for social order," and "looked directly for the mending of practical wrongs;" that the

“twenty-three thousand unheard cases waiting in chancery was a perpetual grievance to him;” that he “was constantly troubled about the abuses of the law;” that he was a man to whom official tyranny never appealed in vain;” “that he was bent on a settlement,” and “showed such a willingness to come to terms with the defeated party, and such a real sympathy with their protracted sufferings, that the sterner spirits at once accused him of gaining the good will of the royalists to serve his own designs;” that he “saw plainly that the nation was not prepared for a definite republic, nor had he any preference for it;” that he “saw that without some monarchical element . . . the English scheme of government and law could scarcely be got into work again;” that “a person as ruler was essential;” that he “inclined toward a personal head of the State, though he shrunk from the name of king;” that soon after his return from Worcester “the question of a new Parliament was raised . . . at his desire;” that he “felt himself to be the guardian of the interests of all, even of those whom he had defeated;” that he was “addressed by petitions for the redress of grievances in the matter of law, of imprisonment, of exactions, of tithes, as to one

. . . into whose hands the sword was put ;” that he came into the position of general moderator ; “that, while some statesmen inclined to a restoration of one of the Stuart princes,” he “objected to any recall of the princes ;” and that he “desired a settlement, with himself invested with some monarchical power, though as to name or prerogative of king he felt, and continued to feel, the deepest hesitation and doubt.”

It will be noticed that allusion is made to a proposition for calling in one of the Stuart princes, and that Cromwell objected to the proposal, as he naturally would do after ten years of effort to keep that family from the throne. It has often struck the writer as a strange thing that Bulstrode Whitelocke, at the conference of grandees at Speaker Lenthall’s house, after the defeat at Worcester, should have said, “There may be a day given for the king’s eldest son, or for the Duke of York to come in to the Parliament ;” and not strange, if this was really said, that Oliver should have replied, “That will be a business of more than ordinary difficulty ;” a mild reply to an offensive remark. But did Whitelocke, at that famous conference, say what he reports himself to have said ? We doubt it. The account of the conference did not see the

light until after the restoration. It may have been changed years after Cromwell was dead. Whitelocke himself wrote it. The learned lawyer, solid though he be, has in him "a kind of dramaturgie turn," a "poetic friskiness" which "detracts from one's confidence" in his entire accuracy in this record.

The Parliament, in the more than twelve years of its session, has been greatly reduced in the number of its members. On its fatal day, according to the highest estimates, less than one hundred were present at the meeting; according to some estimates, less than sixty. But great or small, with many members or with few, it has determined, without any legal or moral right, to perpetuate itself. Cromwell and others tried, in every possible peaceful way, to induce the Parliament not to perpetuate itself, but to dissolve itself, and give the country the opportunity for a new election.

It must be remembered, in this connection, that Oliver was the soul of the Commonwealth. It was not in St. Stephen's Hall, where the debates were going on year after year, that the foundations of the Commonwealth were supported, but at Naseby, at Dunbar and at Worcester.

There were great statesmen in the Parliament,



OLIVER CROMWELL.

*(From Philip L. Hale's copy of Robert Walker's portrait.)*



but these statesmen, without Oliver, would have been powerless to maintain the Government. In the field, in battling against Charles I., against Charles II., against the Irish, against the Scots, the commander of the Ironsides had done the work which was essential to the very existence of the Republic.

With a mental and moral consistency rarely, if ever, surpassed ; with a decision that never for a moment failed him, and a vigor that was inflexible ; with personal bravery equal to that of Cæsar, and devotion to his work like Hannibal's ; with honesty, piety and prayer to God to bless his labors, this man, in sickness, trials, dangers, with humility and self-depreciation, ascribing all his successes to Providence, from the time when he took command of the army to the time when he entered St. Stephen's to tell the members to be gone, was, it is not too much to say, the only support of the Government that could be trusted with safety. If a figure that has truth in it may be used, he was both the corner-stone and the key-stone of the political structure which had been erected in place of a monarchy over the English people. Shall that structure go to pieces, allowing Charles on the ruins of it to build up his kingdom ? This was the question pre-

sented to Cromwell on the morning of April 20, 1653. To prevent, if possible, this catastrophe, he decides to break up the "Rump" of the Parliament, and send the members to their homes.

It is best to fortify the position here taken, which, it is needless to say, is not new or original, by a quotation which the writer was surprised to find in the eighth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. "The Parliament, that great assembly that had molded the Commonwealth, had now, at the end of twelve years, exhausted its vitality, and dwindled into a mere mockery of representative government. It had become, in fact, an oligarchy which had absorbed to itself, not merely the whole administration of public affairs, but the control of many private interests." It was their "only serious occupation to maintain themselves in power and defend themselves against their enemies."

It was a daring act to dissolve even such a Parliament, and especially so in view of the after responsibility, which must, by necessity, fall on Cromwell. Whether or not he had taken a measure of the consequences of the dissolution, or had come to any decision as to what could be the probable result to himself personally, we have no means of knowing. We only know that



duty compelled him to the act of dissolving the Parliament. On the night before the exploit many leading members and many officers of the army were at Oliver's house, and when the meeting broke up it was with the understanding that the shameless proposition that the members of the existing Government "were to be *de jure* members of the new, and to constitute a committee for deciding on the admission of their successors," should at least lie over, and that another meeting should be held the next morning.

The next morning Oliver, in his reception-room, was waiting with a few members for others to come, when a message reached him that the Parliament was hurrying to a vote on the obnoxious bill. What a supreme moment for the St. Ives farmer! The destiny of England is to be decided. The situation was not unlike that in which Julius Cæsar was placed before he advanced from Ravenna on Rome. Cromwell, like the Roman, did not hesitate. He starts off for St. Stephen's Hall in his plain clothes, calling, as he goes, on a company of his regiment to attend him, and to wait outside the House. He goes to his seat, listens for a while to the debate, and when the bill is about to be voted on he rises, as though intending simply to present his views on

it. It is soon discovered that he does not confine himself to the question. He wanders from it. He commends the House for some things it has done; he censures it for its faults; and at last says, "It is not fit that you sit here any longer." He calls for twenty or thirty musketeers, and the work is done. The scene in its details we have not space to describe. It is enough to say that Oliver has now taken the sole responsibility of destroying what remained of the legislature of his country. He has broken up the most famous Parliament that ever sat in England. His comment on this act is almost as remarkable as the act itself. "We did not hear a dog bark at their going," meaning that England quietly accepted what had been done. The judges of the courts, the generals of the army, the captains in the navy send in their adherence to Cromwell, and the Government goes on with a "Constable" at the head of it.

On the day following this judicious violence, the news journal, "*Mercurius Politicus*," contained the following: "The Lord General delivered yesterday in Parliament divers reasons wherefore a present period should be put to the sitting of this Parliament, and it was accordingly done, the speaker and the members all departing ;

the grounds of which proceedings will, it is probable, shortly be made public." Such was the brief, official notice given to England, by Oliver, of this world-important event. The brevity and simplicity of the message are significant.

What next? Chaos or a government? The old Government is gone, it was not worth saving; it would soon, probably, have brought a new war and ruin to the country, but, good or bad, it no longer exists. There is no supreme authority. Cromwell's voice has destroyed all constitutional authority, and the responsibility is now laid on him to reconstruct, with such help as he can get, a government for the country. To a truth-seeking impartial observer, his efforts for the next five years must indicate a man, not of such ambition as has been almost universally attributed to him, but with an ambition limited to the pure and noble desire to secure for the people a good and safe representative administration. Instead of execration, he calls for our admiration and our sympathy.

Within a few weeks one hundred and forty Puritan notables, men of approved fidelity and honesty, are summoned to act as a Parliament in the existing emergency. This extraordinary assembly met on the fourth of July. "The old

and vulgar charge against them," says the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "as a herd of mean and contemptible fanatics, is of a piece with the general run of historic portraiture of Cromwell himself, and has been sufficiently answered even by writers who have little sympathy for him. They were, indeed, a body of most sincere and earnest men, only too eager and comprehensive in their efforts to accomplish a national reform ; but they attempted too much." Of the one hundred and forty all save two came on the summons, and Oliver makes a speech to them which Carlyle says is all glowing with the splendors of genuine veracity and heroic depths and manfulness, and which seems to express the image of the soul it came from.

Oliver was now fifty-four years old. Time had begun to leave its marks on him. Labor, care, sorrow, have left their imprints on his brow. Ambitious, then, of power and preferment? Read the speech and you will dismiss that thought; read it again and carefully, and Oliver will come before you a pitiable man, discharging a duty for the sake of England; read it the third time, and your hatred will be turned to love.

The "Little Parliament," so called, proved a failure. It sat for five months, attempted to

abolish tithes, for one thing, and to have the Christian ministry otherwise supported ; attempted also to abolish the Court of Chancery, in which the twenty-three thousand suits were pending, and to contrive and establish a court in which contestants would not have to wait twenty to thirty years for a settlement of their cases. These legislators of the " Little Parliament " were too wise, too honest, too good, too advanced for the England of that age.

The Presbyterian clergy, snugly settled on tithes, and the lawyers of Temple Bar, having an eye to the continuance of, at least, a part of the twenty-three thousand cases in Chancery, upset Oliver's first schemes for England's good. Do you mean, asked the clergy, to deprive us of our tithes ? Do you mean, asked the lawyers, to deprive us of our " learned wigs," and our " lucrative long-windedness," with your search for " God's law," and " simple justice ? "

Poor Oliver must try again. Public selfish clamor puts an end, for the time, to his proposed reforms, and his Parliament resigns its powers into his hands. He is in a dilemma. What his emotions and griefs were, the reader can imagine. What next ? Shall he become a usurper ? That seems to be the best possible thing. Usurper,

until he can secure a settlement. He calls a council of officers and other persons of interest in the nation, and it is decided that he is to be known as the Lord Protector of England, Ireland and Scotland, and is to have a council to aid him in his work. Usurper then, in one sense, Oliver has now become, though he calls himself, not much elated, a "Constable." Bent, as before and always to the very end of life, on securing a constitutional and stable government, and seeing anarchy, at this time, a danger, and the return of Charles Stuart a menace, he takes a position unknown to the law and to a well-ordered community. It was bravely and nobly done. "Perhaps," remarks Carlyle, "no more perilous place was ever deliberately accepted by a man. The post of honor? No; the post of terror, and of danger, and forlorn hope."

From a time near the beginning of the Protectorate to the end of it, plots were laid every year to take the life of Cromwell, and large rewards, with honors, were offered to those who should succeed in the business; but of those efforts and their failure we shall here say nothing.

A Protectorate Parliament of four hundred members was called for September 3, 1654. At its opening the Protector announced that the end

of the meeting was "healing and settling." "If this meeting," he said, "prove not healing, what shall we do?" Poor man. The speech was received with favor; but the "healing" was not secured. Among four hundred men there would necessarily be some not possessing wisdom, or even common sense, and these members soon began foolishly to debate about the form of government, with its "single person." The Protector appears again and talks for an hour and a half, partly in defense of himself, and partly to let the members know that, called as they had been by himself to the Parliament, they had no right whatever to dispute his position or his authority. It was their business to legislate for the interests of the people, under the Government as it then stood.

He then tells them that he called not himself to the Protectorate, and affirms that some of the members know that fact. "Gentlemen that undertook to form the Government" called him to the guidance of it; that he will not now "part with the duty, unless God and the people shall take it from him;" that he hoped, in a private capacity, to reap the benefits "of our hard labors and hazzards;" that he had begged long ago to be dismissed of his charge, begged it again and

again (referring to a time antecedent to that of the Protectorate), and that that fact was also known to very many; that the chief end of summoning that assembly, the Little Parliament, so far as it related to himself, was to lay down the power which was in his hands.

“I say it to you again, in the presence of that God who hath blessed and been with me in all my adversities and successes, that was, as to myself, my greatest end. . . . The authority I had in my hand, being so boundless as it was (for by act of Parliament I was General of all the forces of the three nations of England, Scotland and Ireland, in which unlimited condition I did not desire to live a day), we called that meeting for the ends before expressed.” “Divers persons here do know whether I lie in that.”

He then tells them that the Protectorate did not put him into a higher capacity than before, but that it limited him; bound him to do nothing without the consent of a council. He asks the members if they had not met under his writs, and tells them that persons “so chosen should not have the power to alter the Government, as now settled in one single person and a Parliament.” He tells them that a few days before they came thither the affairs of the nation were



in peace and quiet ; that enemies abroad were hopeless and scattered ; but that the Parliament, since it met, had put everything into confusion, and was making the Government the scorn of the Dutch ambassadors who were then in London to negotiate their master's affairs.

Becoming more earnest toward the end, he says that before he will throw away the Government he will be rolled into his grave and buried with infamy. Near the close of his speech he says, "I have caused a stop to be put to your entrance into the Parliament House ; I am sorry that there is cause for this, but there is cause."

The Constable then tells the members that they will find in the lobby, without the Parliament door, a thing for them to sign. The "thing" is a parchment, on which is engraved a promise to be true and faithful to the Lord Protector and the Commonwealth, and not to alter the Government as it is settled in a single person and a Parliament.

Before a month has passed three hundred of the four hundred members have put their names to the pledge. A rather singular sort of governor you find this farmer of St. Ives to have been, but pure, true, honest. Even if one cannot love him, it is interesting to watch his movements ; to

see him become the complete master of all the great statesmen of his day, the master of England, and the most invincible of European rulers. He tells Bradshaw and the rest of them, farmer-like, in the speech just quoted from, that he is "almost tired talking to them so long," and he evidently is very sorry to stop the parliamentary harangues. While this is going on inside the Parliament, outside of it Oliver is projecting a movement which is to make the navy of England a permanent and notable power in the world. Yet not one of the four hundred Parliament men knew what he was doing outside the House, while he was scoring them inside, for their infelicitous conduct; not one of them knew what the fleet which he was forming is to do, or where it is to go. Although tired of speaking, and annoyed because he has to speak, he is not too tired for action. In this third speech Oliver was not at his best, but it were better to lose a speech of Burke's or Webster's than to omit reading this talk of the St. Ives farmer to his first Protectorate Parliament.

Large bodies of men, with varying interests, personal and local, as shown in the French Revolution and in the history of the United States, find it difficult work to settle a government, and

so it proved in England. After about five months Oliver discovers that the Parliament is likely to do nothing, or rather nothing but mischief. And then the "Constable" calls the members to the "Painted Chamber," and makes another long speech to them, which he closes with these words: "I think it my duty to tell you that it is not for the profit of these nations, nor for common and public good, for you to continue here any longer; and therefore I do declare unto you that I do dissolve this Parliament."

That the members listened in silence, is both a proof of his greatness and of the truth of what he had said. He told them that he had not interfered in any way with their proceedings; that he had been caring for their quiet sitting, and that they had kept him "locked up" as to what they were transacting. "You might have proceeded to make those good and wholesome laws which the people expected from you;" but instead of "peace and settlement," instead of "mercy and truth, . . . weeds and nettles, briars and thorns have thriven under your shadow. . . Dissettlement and division, discontent and dissatisfaction . . . have been more multiplied within the five months of your sitting than in some years before."

What a charge! What a rebuke! How sharp, yet how tender! But for the restraints of his moral endowments, but for the pious element in him, this man Oliver might have in our day, in the annals of sarcasm, a place with Dean Swift and Junius. He was too good, however, to be needlessly cutting, and so he let the members off rather kindly and mildly. It is to be regretted that our limited space forbids more of this speech to be given; but enough has been quoted to indicate the sort of material Oliver was made of, and that he had good and sufficient reasons for sending the members to their homes.

Carlyle says that this Parliament "considered that its one duty was to tie up the hands of the Protector well," and that Oliver "thought far otherwise." Another comment is, "Courage, my brave Oliver! Thou hast but three years more of it, and then the coils and puddles of this earth are all behind thee; and Carrion Heath, and Chancellor Hyde, and Charles Stuart, the Christian king, can work their will."

On the seventeenth of September, 1656, another Parliament and the Protector met in the Painted Chamber. Oliver began his speech by saying that he had pity on himself when he thought of the duty before him; but he turns his

pity to the members when he considers how they will have to listen to him, in a close heated room. This was his fifth speech. It was extemporaneous like all his speeches. Oliver had, in earlier life, preached to his soldiers, and in that way we suppose he had acquired the art of talking in public, not, however, on politics. On this occasion he became very weary, and said to the members, "I know you are so, too." It was a great speech; a remarkable one for a man to make who had been for twenty years a farmer, and for ten years a soldier; "rude, massive, genuine, not so fit for Drury Lane as for Valhalla and the Sanhedrim of the gods."

We regret that in a work of this nature space forbids our quoting a line of it. In the lobby, as they were retiring, the members learned that they were to be winnowed; that something less than a hundred of them were to be excluded. A protest is made, to which the Protector pays no attention. The imperial Constable has decided, and can waste no time on protests.

It was at this time, or a little later, that thirty-eight wagon loads of Spanish silver passed through the streets of London to be coined at the Tower into English money; an evidence that the Government is not limited to speech-making.

That naval movement, which was so much a mystery to the members of the previous Parliament, has begun to take effect.

A large minority, at least, of the people of England have now discovered that, not only in war but in peace, Cromwell is the fittest man that they have to hold the supreme command. When he returned from Worcester, they recognized him as their greatest soldier; they now see that he is also their greatest statesman; the ablest man for governing that can be found; not a Protector only, but a born ruler. The members of the new Parliament recognize his worth, and by a large majority they vote to offer him the kingship. A king he has been for three years, but now he is asked to accept the title.

On the last day of March, in the year 1657, Cromwell being then fifty-eight years old, the banqueting-room at Whitehall presented a spectacle which never before, and never since that day, has had a parallel. It may have been the custom in ancient times for men to raise upon their shields their strongest, ablest warrior and call him king; but two centuries ago, kingship was supposed to be a divine gift, received through those in whose veins flowed royal and sacred blood. Not so thought the men of this second

Protectorate Parliament. They saw in Cromwell a true king; one needing no anointing; a leader fit to lead, a ruler fit to rule, and now they come to Whitehall to offer the Protector the crown which William the Conqueror and Elizabeth had worn. The entire House came to present the "Petition" with the title King on it.

As is his custom, Oliver replies that "the thing" will deserve the utmost deliberation and consideration. Three days later a Parliament committee waits upon him, and he then declines the title, saying, "that may be fit for you to offer, which may not be fit for me to undertake." A few days further on a larger committee, composed of ninety-nine members, waits upon him, and urges his acceptance. Whitelocke and others exhaust their legal learning, touching kingship, in the effort to convince him that it is his duty to take the name of king.

There are seven speeches of Oliver's about this matter, and in not one of them can a line be found to indicate that he had the slightest ambition for a crown. One sees in them (or rather the writer sees in them) a man struggling to find the path before him; groping his way on the side of a volcano, amid smoke and increasing darkness, hoping, yet almost against hope, to

reach sun-lit valleys in safety ; a man, appealing to our hearts for sympathy, for affection, for pity. With the approval of all, and especially of the army, it is possible he would have acceded to the request ; that he desired the title, or put the least value upon it, there is no proof ; there is the opposite of proof. Constable is yet the better name for this immortal man.

Let me quote a few of his words. "I am not able for such a trust and charge. . . . Out of necessity I undertook the business of Protector." He "has not desired the continuance of his power or place, under one title or another. . . . Truly, I have, as before God, often thought that I could not tell what my business was in the place I stood in, save comparing myself to a good constable set to keep the peace of the parish. . . . If the wisdom of the Parliament should have found a way to settle the interests of the nation upon the foundations of justice, truth and liberty, I would have lain at their feet that things might have run in such a current."

Justice, truth, liberty ! When, in the Roman Forum, or in any modern hall of legislation, have patriots uttered a more comprehensive, or a nobler desire ? Finally he says, "I should not be an



honest man if I did not tell you that I cannot undertake this Government with the title of king, and that is mine answer to this great and weighty business."

While Oliver has the parchment offering kingship in his hands, and is trying to tell the Parliament in proper and grateful language that he declines the offer, Admiral Blake, under his orders, is sinking Spanish ships in the harbor of Santa Cruz, across the Atlantic, and an army is getting ready in England to join Turenne in the Low Countries to fight the Spaniards there. The Protector evidently has enough to do outside of Whitehall and kingship, and he has also a most disagreeable obligation soon to discharge, touching this very Parliament which has offered him the crown. The discussion about that matter being over, a new frame of Government including two Houses having been voted, Oliver having been formally installed as Protector, the prospect for harmony seemed bright, but it proved illusive. The first session of the Parliament closed harmoniously, and public affairs went on prosperously; but all hope of a settlement vanished soon after the second session began. "Success on such a basis as the humors and parliamentary talking of four hundred men, is very uncertain."

The first session decided to have another House, but did not decide what to call it. Oliver made up the "other House," with six peers, and such "men of eminence as the time had yielded." On the opening of the second session, his health not being good, he spoke but little, and then called on Mr. Fennes to discover particularly what may be proper for the meeting. Mr. Fennes discovers, among other things, that cosmos is rising out of chaos in England; but poor Oliver, a day or two later, sees more chaos than cosmos, and he deals with the chaos in his characteristic way. The Commons began their work in a dispute touching the name of the other House. Shall it be called a House of Lords? Four hundred men in a crazy vessel floating on a dangerous shore, and some of them foolish enough, instead of helping to avert wreckage, to quarrel about the shape of their sails and the colors of their flags! A few years later, standing at Charing Cross, under the gibbets, or passing through the water-gate to the dungeons of the Tower, they could repent their short-sightedness and their folly. Some of them had leisure to repent it in exile.

Hearing of the proceedings in the Commons, Oliver instantly summoned both Houses to Whitehall; the members must appear at three o'clock

in the banqueting-room. The Constable of England is sick, but not yet too sick for duty. To that banqueting-room, where kingship had been offered, like sheep obeying the voice of a shepherd, the four hundred came at the appointed hour, and Oliver says to them: "I look upon this to be the great duty of my place, as being set on a watch-tower, to see what may be for the good of these nations, and what may be for the preventing of evil." You are now come, in as great straits and difficulties as ever nation was in. It is the "being" rather than the well-being that is at stake. He pleads for the Protestant cause abroad, and tells them that concerns the good interests of England; that the Spaniards have been asked to help the Cavaliers; that the "sects" are all striving to be uppermost; that it will be wisdom to uphold the "settlement;" that he will be ready to stand or fall with them in the seemingly promising union; that he has taken his oath to govern according to the laws which are now made; and then he repeats, in stronger language than ever, what he has often said before: "I sought not this place. I speak it before God, angels and men, I did not. You sought me for it. You brought me to it."

The speech was the despairing appeal of a

hero, but it accomplished no good. Some of the members, indeed, attempt wise legislation ; but others of the four hundred keep up, for ten days, their noise and “yelping” about the form of the Government. When on this earth did ever four hundred wise men get together and speak wisely ?

And now the Protector does not call the members to Whitehall. He goes to them. Black Rod, sign of his coming and sign that debate must stop, appears in the Commons. The Protector, it is announced, is in the “other House,” Lords’ House ; and there he makes his last Parliament speech. A few months later his voice will be forever silent, and England will have no one to rule her well ; will have, however, a Convocation that can make about six hundred changes in the Prayer Book, to annoy and snub the Presbyterians ; a Parliament that can pull a hundred and more lifeless bodies out of their tombs, and pack up Baxter, Bunyan and an innumerable company of non-conformists in jail ; and a king who deserves to be remembered, because, after twenty-five years of misrule, he was able to gasp out on his dying bed, the humane wish that Nelly might not starve, and so leave one good record of his reign.

In his last speech Oliver tells the members,

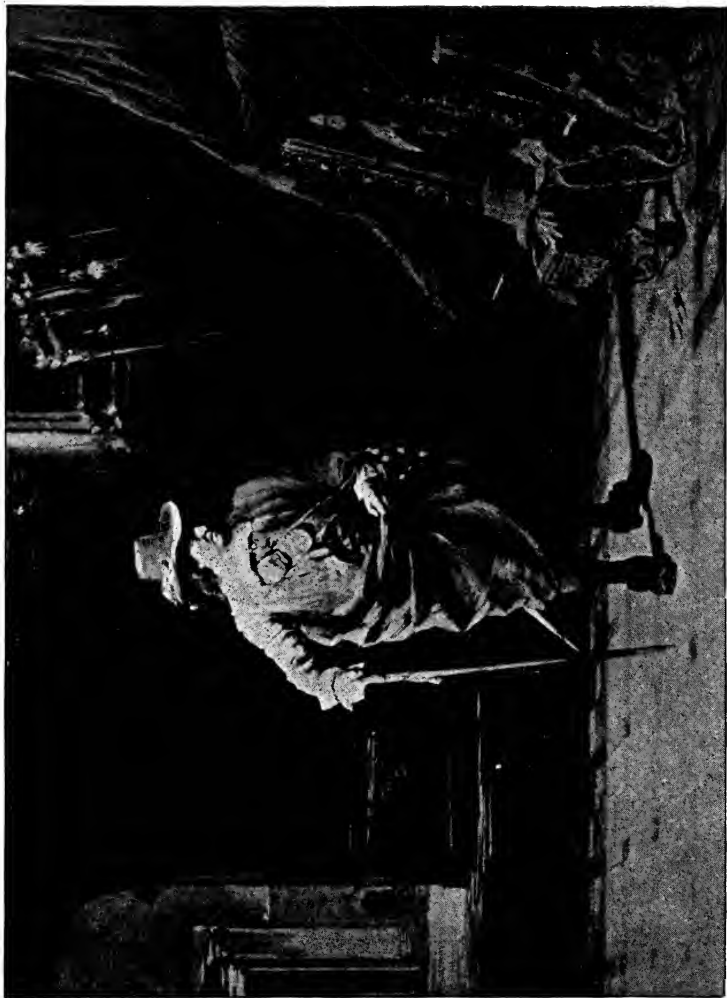
rather plainly, what he thinks of them, and what a coil they had got him into at the very time when the king of Scots is getting ready to invade England ; and then he dissolves the Parliament. In this speech he says : “ I can say, in the presence of God, in comparison with whom we are but like poor creeping ants upon the earth, I would have been glad to have lived under my woodside, to have kept a flock of sheep, rather than undertake such a government as this.”

Cant ? Hypocrisy ? No, my reader. His thoughts go back to his old home, to his quiet woodside of St. Ives, to the peaceful, pleasant memories of his farmer life ; but that life is not for him now. He knows that there is no other man in England capable of saving it ; and it is now doubtful if he can do it. But he must go on. Almost at the moment when these pathetic words fell from him, the Duke of Ormond, Charles’s head man, lies concealed in London, and the Dutch have hired out ships to bring an army over. The Protector’s return to private life is impossible, so long as he is struck with the duty of keeping Charles Stuart out of England. This prince must wait until Cromwell dies, and then he can come back ; but he will come to

an England which, since his father's day, has changed; an England in which his foul court, with its Nell Gwynns and its beastly spectacles, will be but as an eruption and a stench on the fair face of the country; an England, too, which will have its constitution and its liberty before the century has closed, in spite of the restoration of this monarch and the succession of his brother James.

Almost immediately after uttering his last words to the Parliament, "God be judge between you and me," Oliver summons his army officers, summons the mayor and council of London, and begins the work of arresting royalist ring-leaders. Some are sent to the Tower; death is the penalty of a few; mercy is accorded to the rest. The insurrection is suppressed. "An old friend of yours is in town," Oliver said to Lord Broghill, "in Drury Lane." "You had better tell him to be gone." The Duke of Ormond did not need to be told twice. He was off in a twinkling across the Channel, to inform His Sacred Majesty that the game was up.

It is a remark of Bishop Burnet, that it was generally believed that Oliver's life and all his arts were exhausted at once; and that had he lived longer he could not have held things



CROMWELL IN WHITEHALL, BEFORE A PORTRAIT OF CHARLES I.

*(From a painting by J. Schröder.)*





together. It is to be hoped that the good bishop derived comfort from this reflection; but the fact is that Oliver never stood higher or more firmly than in the months immediately preceding his death. It was then that news came of great victories abroad; of Dunkirk taken. It was in June, before his life went out, that Louis XIV. sent a splendid embassy to congratulate the "most invincible of sovereigns," and the embassy was still in London with its splendors when the clouds gathered in the autumn over Hampton Court; in fact, whatever Bishop Burnet's friends related to him, the mere ghost of Cromwell, a year after his death, made Cardinal Mazarin, the great minister of France, refuse an interview with His Majesty, Charles, while he "sent his coaches and guards a day's journey, to meet Lockhart, the Commonwealth's ambassador. The government of Cromwell was not exhausted nor was it in the least degree weakened, notwithstanding the unwise Parliaments, until he ceased to control it; and even after his death it stood for a while on the power which his name left with it.

Thurloe, who knew more of Oliver's plans than others, and who, indeed, was the protector of the Protector, intimates that another Parlia-

ment would have been summoned had not death put an end to future efforts, and at the same time extinguished all the hopes of the Puritans.

In the first year of the reign of Victoria, as intimated before, an order was issued from the court to have annexed to the Prayer Book forms of service for use in all the Episcopal Churches of the kingdom. One of these services was for the "unspeakable mercies" which followed the restoration; and, singularly enough, another of them called for praise for the coming into England of King William in safety. The Thanksgiving Service, made by act of Parliament in Charles's time, was worth preserving as a curious piece of history; but to connect Victoria with its collects was a tribute to Charles wholly uncalled for, and one for which Her Majesty, in her mature years, could feel no gratitude. The service for the "unspeakable mercies" of the restoration is not found now in the English Prayer Book; and the matter is only alluded to here to show that adoration of Charles II. and, perhaps, contempt for Cromwell, have in late years somewhat abated. Cromwell and William III. are the men who deserve thanks and praise from the sovereigns and from the people of England.

## CHAPTER VII.

### FOREIGN POLICY.

ENGLAND rose suddenly, under Cromwell, to a position among the nations of Europe which she had never occupied before; but within a few years of the Protector's death she fell back to her old place, and even far below it; Dutch guns were then heard on the banks of the river Thames, and Dunkirk became purchasable by France. For two hundred years England was not so low down in the scale of nations as she fell during the reign of Charles II.; for seven hundred and thirty years, from the time of William I. to the time of William III., there was no reign in which she ranked so high as during the Protectorate.

The suddenness of Cromwell's recognition by the great powers of the Continent, and the almost

immediate efforts of both Spain and France to secure his friendship and alliance, give a most remarkable proof of his power and of the estimation in which he was held. He had at once the keen diplomatist, Cardinal Mazarin, almost at his feet; he would have no cousinship with Louis XIV., but demanded to be addressed as *mon frère*, my brother; and yet when Beverning, the lame ambassador from the States General, appeared on political business at Whitehall, Oliver offered him a chair just like the one he himself sat in; and when Beverning declined to take it, Oliver stood and talked as an equal. The dignity of the Government must be preserved with the French king; but dignity must yield to kindness with this lame ambassador, who would not sit, except in the chair he was brought in, and who could not stand because of his infirmity.

The Protector, too, always required the same respect to be shown to his representatives abroad that had been previously shown to the ministers of kings. An amusing illustration of this fact may be found in the Thurloe "State Papers." Prideaux, Oliver's minister at Moscow, noticed that the lords of His Imperial Majesty of Russia did not take off their hats for him, and that he

was asked to take off his sword when he had audience with the czar. Prideaux, thereupon, told the Russian chancellor that "when he had the honor to deliver the Lord Protector's letter to His Majesty he was not treated with as representatives of kings were," and that "England had not diminished anything of its greatness." The chancellor replied that he would report to His Majesty, and at the next audience "everything was done" to Prideaux's satisfaction. "The noblemen did rise up uncovered," and all due respect was paid to the English Government.

The czar gave a dinner to Prideaux, and at parting said that "I should remember him to Oliver Vladitella, to whom he wished good health." Vladitella meant Sole Director of England, Ireland and Scotland. The letter also says that the emperor wrote to Oliver. In one thing, however, Prideaux appears to have failed. He said to the chancellor that Oliver would like to know why the czar was making war against the Poles. It would seem that Oliver had enough to occupy his thoughts without interesting himself in Poland. The date of Prideaux's letter — a letter which is quite as entertaining as the narratives in historical novels — is March 17, 1654.

Among the letters intercepted on their way to France was one written soon after the acceptance of the Protectorate, which defines the position which Oliver held in connection with the European powers. "The Protector," says the letter, "the craftiest man in all Christendom, hath made himself 'the greatest prince in the world, to whom kings must do homage; and the princes situated the farthest off will be glad to be united to him.'" This letter was written to Mr. Patin, a Paris merchant, and it contained the truth touching Oliver's influence and power. The princes near and those far off were all inclined, or forced, to pay the Protector homage; some of them desired to be closely connected with him. Sweden early sent its congratulations; in 1654 Spain, still the strongest power in Europe, offered "an offensive and defensive alliance;" yet earlier, Denmark sent an ambassador to London.

A Copenhagen letter says: "In case the treaty with the Dutch should not succeed, then this king" (of Denmark) "will apply to the Protector of England."

Embassies were then what they are not in our day. Forty gentlemen accompanied the Dutch ambassadors to Whitehall, twenty of whom were expecting "to have the honor to kiss the

Protector's hand." His Highness, one of the ambassadors reports, declined the kissing, but he "bowed to all the gentlemen, one by one."

France, not for love of Oliver, but in fear of him, submitted to England; and was kept in an attitude of deference, as already related, even for a year subsequent to the Protector's death. Portugal, Tuscany, Venice, Genoa, Tunis, Algiers, and the Mediterranean pirates followed in the train of the greater European powers, and by treaties or alliances, paid their homage to the St. Ives farmer, who, through the whole of this illustrious foreign work, and the honors which he gained, was acting as a constable at home, watching and defeating plotting royalists; watching and defeating the unwise movements of his Parliaments.

Oliver was fortunate in securing to aid him, in his foreign work, two men, one of whom will always be remembered and honored in the British navy; while the other, neglected and almost forgotten, deserves to have his name written on the pages of history with the names of the most able and faithful of diplomatists. Blake and Thurloe were the fittest selections that could be made; the one for work at sea, the other for work in council. Oliver had the reputation not only of

knowing what material a soldier should be made of, but also of seeing generally into the characters of men ; and two could not have been found more competent to assist him than his admiral and his devoted secretary. Blake was a country gentleman of the good English type ; a Puritan, but one who could laugh, blunt in manner, free from fear, inflexible in duty, and a man who could obey Oliver in the Spanish business with a clear conscience.

The immense volumes of "State Papers" left by John Thurloe give proof of his great ability, his wonderful industry, and his devotion to the Protector. Cecil was not more watchful over Queen Elizabeth than Thurloe over Oliver. Indeed, it may be doubted if the Protector would have lived to do his work but for the spies whom Thurloe kept, and the intercepted letters which he placed in Cromwell's hands. Plot after plot against the Government failed ; but it is probable that some of these plots would have been successful if Thurloe had had less clear sight, less energy, and a less strong will.

In the year 1831 the great magician of fiction, the enchanter of his age, published, in an English review, this gloomy statement : "The large collection, called Thurloe's 'State Papers,' containing



the most authentic materials respecting the period of the great civil war and of Cromwell's domination, was, not long since, and perhaps still is to be purchased at something little higher than the price of waste paper." Thurloe's seven folio volumes, which the present writer has used in preparing this little book, weigh about forty or fifty pounds avoirdupois, and would be worth, delivered at a paper mill, less than one dollar; for historical purposes these volumes have a value which cannot be measured by money. The annals left by Julius Cæsar are not more precious to the student of Roman history than are these papers to the student of English history.

Cromwell and Thurloe evidently were not in demand in the English market in the year 1831. In truth the Protector was then an object only to be seen through royalist mediums, and in royalist sewers; a disgusting, ill-tempered, whining, hypocritical creature; a "grand imposter" who rose "by his subtle arts in praying, preaching, groaning and howling to the highest pitch of sovereignty;" a "monster" lacking all good qualities; a "bad man," consigned to hell by Lord Clarendon, and by Southey stopped just on the edge.

Sir Walter, you thought, when you were writ-

ing the sentence which we have quoted, that "Waverley" and "Woodstock," with their artistic pictures, would always be worth more than a penny a pound. You did not dream that some readers, within a period of sixty years, finding these stories not to contain real history, would value them at the "price of waste paper," and be looking into Thurloe for true and vivid pictures of the past, and for a wonderful accumulation of "the most authentic materials respecting the period of the great civil war, and of Cromwell's domination." For a historical novel, with truth for its basis, no one work of the seventeenth century would, we believe, supply so much matter as Thurloe's. And as to history, it is enough to say that Thurloe's "letters of intelligence," "intercepted letters," once secret letters written with lemon juice, letters written in cipher, which disclose their contents to sharp eyes in Whitehall Palace, reports of foreign ministers, reports of spies, etc., have supplied Samuel R. Gardiner with no small part of the material which he has used in the preparations of his "History of the Great Civil War." Thurloe is no longer in the waste paper basket.

It was impossible that Oliver should leave out of sight, in his foreign policy, the commercial

and material interests of England ; but it was as the Protector of Protestantism, and the avenger of those who in his view were, to use Milton's words, "slaughtered saints" that he became conspicuous and powerful. It was not for the commerce, or aggrandizement of his country that he chiefly lived, but for the championship of what he believed to be religion. It was love for the people of his country, love as simple and as pure as was Washington's, that guided him.

It was not so much to make the nation great that he labored, but to make it safe and happy. The glory of England was a result of his polity ; it was not its object. He would have put himself at the head of the Protestants of Europe had it been in his power to unite them ; failing in that, relying on himself, on Blake, on his Ironsides, and on God, he determines to do what he can to lessen the power of Rome, and especially to cripple the blood-stained hand of the king of Spain. His sincerity in this no one who knows what his education had been, and what his letters and speeches reveal, can for a moment doubt. One distinguished Roman Catholic writer, Lingard the historian, has acknowledged his honesty. "Dissembling in religion," he says, "is contradicted by the uniform tenor of his life."

Within a few months of his admission to the Protectorate, Oliver signed treaties of peace with three Protestant nations, Denmark, Sweden and Holland ; and had the Church of Rome and Philip IV. of Spain been tolerant, the war flags of the navy would probably have been furled, leaving Blake no duty except that of compelling Tunis, Algiers and Tripoli to stop their piracies, and to release the English captives whom they held.

Spain, in the middle of the seventeenth century, though growing weaker year by year, was still, perhaps, the strongest nation on the continent, and she was still, as she had been for a long period, the terror of Protestants. Her Inquisition, though not in full vigor in Oliver's day, yet continued its work of burning Christians, and it yet added mercilessly to the hundreds of thousands whom it had imprisoned, sometimes to the annoyance of English sea captains, and traders in Spanish ports. The Armada had proved a failure, and the Thirty Years' War had ended.

Austria could no longer hope to overthrow the German followers of Luther ; but France, little inclined to toleration, was rising into power, and the question, Shall Roman Catholicism be dominant in Europe, and continue its torturing prac-

tices? was not fully settled. At least so it appeared to Oliver, and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, a crime and a horror impossible during the Protectorate, gives support to his opinion.

He has been criticised for not seeing that the danger was over; for still holding, in the middle of the seventeenth century, the ideas which prevailed among Puritan Englishmen at the outbreak, in his youth, of the Thirty Years' War. It is enough to say that he fully believed, as he wrote to his admirals, that "the Lord had a controversy with that Romish Babylon of which the Spaniard is the great under-propper;" and that he believed what he said to his Parliament of 1654, "you have on your shoulders the interests of all Christian people in the world." The correctness of his view may be disputed; but his honesty, which alone we here wish to prove, is too evident to admit of dispute. Under these circumstances and with his convictions, the Protector, as his speeches and letters indicate, considered it a part of his business not only to keep guard over Protestants wherever he could reach them by his authority or prestige, but also, if possible, to put it out of the power of princes to persecute them. Striking illustrations of his

efficiency in this line of policy will presently be given ; but we must now, for a page or two, follow the fortunes of Blake.

The first work of Admiral Blake at sea was to blockade, for six months, Prince Rupert in Kinsale Harbor, Ireland ; and on the escape of the prince to follow him to the Tagus to blockade him again. The king of Portugal interfering, he burned three of his ships, captured seventeen of them and sailed for home. He soon made sail again, found the royalist fleet in the harbor of Malaga and destroyed it. He next took the Scilly Islands. In the Dutch war he was at the outset defeated by Von Tromp who had an overwhelming force ; in the sequel he conquered the Dutch commander.

In November, 1654, he is sent by Oliver to the Mediterranean to bring the Duke of Tuscany, the Knights of Malta and the piratical States of northern Africa to terms. The Dey of Tunis, in scorn, resisted and bade the admiral "behold his castles." Blake sailed into the harbor, within musket shot of the castles, fired nine of the Dey's ships, and brought the pirate to a treaty.

War with Spain followed ; and after cruising off Cadiz and the Spanish coast for a while, Blake, though in poor health, started his fleet

for Santa Cruz, in Teneriffe, where in the bay, lying in crescent shape, he found sixteen Spanish vessels, the Plate Fleet, at anchor under the shelter of the guns of the castle and several forts. He entered the bay, poured his broadsides in every direction and soon the gold ships became useless charred hulks. Even Clarendon does not withhold a sort of praise for this exploit. He says, "The whole action was so incredible that all men who knew the place wondered that any sober man, with what courage soever endowed, would ever have undertaken it."

This was the last naval engagement of this great captain. He recrossed the Atlantic, but not for repose and honors in England. He sailed again for the coast of Spain, sailed there for duty, for his love of country, to use his own words, "to hinder foreigners from fooling us." Failing health, however, at last compelled him to return to his native shores, but he was not to see them; he died when his ship was entering the harbor of Plymouth. The annals of naval warfare contain few, if any, more honored names than that of Robert Blake.

At the time when the English fleet sailed for the Mediterranean, Oliver dispatched another fleet with secret orders directing an attack on

St. Domingo; the expedition proved a failure as regards that island, but it secured for England her first possession in that part of the world where Spain had made those vast acquisitions which aided in making her the most conspicuous empire in Europe, but which could not save her from sinking, before the end of the seventeenth century, to a second-rate power. Jamaica was added to the British Colonies.

While these new and strange things were going on at sea, Oliver was proving his strength on the Continent by acts to which the Catholic powers were not accustomed, and which somewhat startled them. The Duke of Savoy had begun a massacre of his Protestant subjects in the Alpine mountains, and while Milton "called on God to avenge his slaughtered saints," Cromwell determined to interfere.

Clarendon's account of this affair is worth transcribing. "Cromwell's greatness at home was but a shadow of the glory he had abroad. It was hard to discover which feared him most, France, Spain, or the Low Countries, where his friendship was current at the value he put upon it. As they did all sacrifice their honor and their interest to his pleasure, so there is nothing he could have demanded that either of them



would have denied him. To manifest which, there needs only two instances. The first is when those of the valley of Lucerne had unwarily rebelled against the Duke of Savoy, which gave occasion to the Pope and the neighbor princes of Italy to call and solicit for their extirpation ; and their prince positively resolved upon it, Cromwell sent his agent to the Duke of Savoy, a prince with whom he had no correspondence or commerce, and so engaged the cardinal " (Mazarin) "and even terrified the Pope himself, without so much as doing any grace to the English Roman Catholics (nothing being more usual than his saying that his ships in the Mediterranean should visit Civita Vecchia, and that the sound of his cannon should be heard in Rome), that the Duke of Savoy thought it necessary to restore all that he had taken from them, and did renew all those privileges they had formerly enjoyed and newly forfeited."

It will be seen from this extract that the Protector, in this case, acted simply as a constable to keep the peace for Protestants. But Clarendon does not give the whole of the story. When the news of the persecution reached him, Oliver was about to sign a treaty which he desired with Louis XIV. of France. The day had come for

the signing of the treaty, but the Protector refused to put his name to it unless the French king will promise to assist him in putting a stop to the Duke of Savoy's atrocities. Milton, his Latin secretary, now blind, sends out letters to the Protestant States, and writes his immortal sonnet. Louis yields. Cardinal Mazarin reluctantly informs the Duke of Savoy that the exiles who have been left alive by his soldiers must be permitted to return to their homes. Oliver himself sends two thousand pounds for their relief; a day of religious service is appointed; collections aggregating a very large amount of money are taken in the churches of England. The Lord Protector is said to have melted into weeping on this occasion; if so the fire of a righteous anger must soon have dried his tears.

It was a daring and a noble act which he accomplished, and not a common one, surely, in the history of rulers. It is related that the Duke of Savoy, after having been thus checkmated, sent for the Protector's picture to hang in his gallery. No wonder, for he had an eye for a brave man; and very likely he was, at heart, as compassionate as Oliver, and as honest in his work. It would be an error to suppose that all those who burned heretics were more wicked than

other men. It was a duty with many of them to cleanse the Church. Even Isabella, to whom Columbus was so much indebted, a gentlewoman, who made the Castile court "a nursery of virtue," and the purity of whose piety no one can doubt, was the nurturing mother of the Inquisition; that organization to her was sacred; and a sacred duty it may have seemed to the Duke of Savoy to persecute the heretics of his dominion. At any rate he deserves a white mark for sending for Oliver's picture.

"The other instance of his authority," says Clarendon, "was yet greater and more incredible," and "nobody can wonder that Cromwell's memory remains still, in those parts (Nismes and its vicinity in France), and with those people, in great veneration." The facts, condensed, are the following: "In the city of Nismes, . . . where those of the religion do most abound, there was a great faction . . . when the consuls (who are the chief magistrates) were to be chosen. Those of the reformed religion" (the Huguenots) "had the confidence to set up one of themselves for that magistracy, which they of the Roman religion resolved to oppose with all their power. The dissension between them made so much noise that the intendant of the province, who is the

chief magistrate in all civil affairs throughout the whole province, went thither to prevent any disorder that might happen. When the day of election came, those of the religion possessed themselves, with many armed men, of the town-house, where the election was to be made. The magistrate sent to know what their meaning was, to which they answered they were there to give their voices for the choice of the new consul, and to be sure that the election should be fairly made. The bishop of the city, the intendant of the province, and all the officers of the church, and the present magistrate of the town, went together in their robes to be present at the election, without any suspicion that there would be any force used. When they came near the gate of the town-house, which was shut, and they supposed would be opened when they came, they within poured out a volley of musket-shot upon them, by which the dean of the church, and two or three of the magistrates of the town were killed upon the place, and very many others wounded ; whereby some died shortly after."

An account of this transaction was sent to the court at Paris, and "the court was glad of the occasion, and resolved that this provocation . . . should warrant all kinds of severity in that

city, even to the pulling down their temples, and expelling many of them for ever out of the city, which with the execution and forfeiture of many of the principal persons would be a general mortification of all of the religion in France, with whom they were heartily offended ; and a part of the army was forthwith ordered to march toward Nismes, to see this executed with the utmost rigor."

Probably this account from Clarendon might have been modified by a Huguenot eye-witness ; but, admitting that the facts were as stated, the power of the Protector is made the more remarkable. "Those of the religion in the town" at once sent to the magistrates to excuse themselves, and to impute what had been done to the rashness of particular men, who had no order for what they did. "The magistrates replied that they could do nothing till the king's pleasure be known."

The Huguenots "very well knew what the king's pleasure" would be ; and so they sent a Scotchman, one Moulins, "to Cromwell, to desire his protection and interposition." Cromwell replied to the messenger that he "would take care of the business," and "that night" he sent another messenger to his ambassador, Lockhart, "who

by the time Moulins came thither " (to Paris) "had so far prevailed with the cardinal, that orders were sent to stop the troops, which were upon their march toward Nismes." A full pardon and amnesty were secured from the king. Such is Clarendon's narrative, and he adds : "Cromwell would never suffer himself to be denied anything he ever asked of Cardinal Mazarin."

It is impossible to recall this incident, and forget what occurred in France twenty years later. Could Cromwell and his Ironsides have lived till 1685, there would have been no "Revocation of the Edict of Nantes." Madame de Maintenon would have pleaded in vain with Louis XIV. to expiate his sins by pronouncing sentence against the Huguenots. In the failure of diplomacy, an English army would have planted its standards before the walls of Paris, to which, if need were, a hundred thousand Protestants from the million or more in the country, would have rallied ; and that calamity which deprived France of its best citizens, and drove women and children into exile, would have been averted.

At the court of Louis XIV., England, during the Protectorate, was represented by William

Lockhart, a Scotchman, a soldier, an ambassador who had no superior, probably no equal, in his age; a man worthy to serve under Oliver, and in company with Thurloe and Milton. His abilities were great enough to obliterate the memory of his connection with the Commonwealth, and to secure for him from Charles II., after all was over with the Protectorate, the same place in the French court, which he had held under Cromwell. A new treaty, which he made with Louis, resulted in the last triumph for England, connected with the Protector's administration. It was agreed that six thousand men of the English army should join the French forces for an attack on the Spanish army in the Netherlands. The Protector had two objects in view: to cripple Spain, and to secure for England a harbor or two on the coast opposite the Channel, which would aid him in the event of attempted royalist invasions. Under date of August 31, 1657, he wrote Lockhart: "This action will probably divert the Spaniards from assisting Charles Stuart in any attempt on us;" and this also he wrote: "If the French be so false to us, as that they would not have us have any footing" (harbor town as pay for aid rendered) "then ask for payment of our expenses,

and draw off our men." It was at this time that Frenchmen are reported to have said: "The cardinal is more afraid of Oliver than of the devil."

The expedition was successful ; but while London and all England was celebrating its victories, and rejoicing especially over the acquisition of Dunkirk, Oliver, broken down by grief, was ministering at the bedside of his daughter Elizabeth, and the time was drawing near when his mighty spirit must end its earthly mission.

It was the aim of the Protector, in all his foreign policy, to unite Protestant Europe with England, in one great, effectual league. European politics and accessions of power to the Commonwealth centered in his mind about that to him desirable and even necessary result. It has been said that his pious enthusiasm in this particular, deceived and misguided him. It has been affirmed that he was misled by the conservative and unspeculative temper of his mind, as well as by the strength of his religious enthusiasm. Of the change in the world around him, remarks a late historian, Cromwell "seems to have discovered nothing." Perhaps so, but we must question the truth of the statement. It is impossible that Oliver should have kept his eyes



shut during the Thirty Years' War. He certainly discovered not a little during the time of the Protectorate. Although he may not have learned through Prideaux all the plans and purposes of the czar, he probably knew as much about Russian policy as modern diplomatists. The changes in the world were known and comprehended in the cabins at Plymouth, on the banks of the Connecticut, in the settlement at Boston, through the numerous pamphlets of the time ; that Oliver, with these and the thousands of Thurloe documents within his sight, was ignorant of them, is incredible. The work of Gustavus Adolphus was as closely watched by intelligent Puritans as was Grant's work or Lee's work in our civil war. We venture to suggest that Oliver knew as much of what was going on in Germany and adjacent countries as the modern historian who writes about these matters. How Wallenstein, in the interests of popery, had overrun Brandenburg and Denmark, and how Gustavus, in the face of the laughter of European generals, had landed his little army on the coast of Pomerania, and begun the exploits which have immortalized his name ; how the army of Tilly, the great commander-in-chief of the Catholic League, was crushed, and the power of Austria

broken ; how Protestantism was saved, and Gustavus was recognized as its liberator, Oliver well knew ; and did he not also know that the same spirit which had inspired the Thirty Years' War, and which had made a wilderness of the Protestant parts of Germany, still existed in Spain, in France, and in half the countries of Europe, at the time when he was Protector ? It is easy for a historian, with a touch of his pen, to question Cromwell's statesmanship touching this matter of a Protestant League, and to say that he was behind his age ; and it is quite as easy to affirm, as we do, that a combination of the Protestant countries for common protection, was not an unwise policy ; and that, had such a league as Cromwell desired and labored for, been secured, the history of the Huguenots, who after the time of the Protector, under the fatal rule of Louis, were subjected to the most merciless persecutions, and finally scattered as exiles in the Protestant parts of Europe, and on the shores of America, might have been, probably would have been, quite different from that history which, after the lapse of two centuries, is now read with a shudder and with indignation.

Protector of England, and, on a limited scale, Protector of the Protestants of Europe, Oliver

was also the protector of the New England Colonies; and the only English protector which these colonies ever had.

In the line of English rulers, from James I. to William IV., there was not one, save Cromwell, who is entitled to our grateful remembrance. The debt which we owe to James I. and to his son Charles is not a debt of gratitude. To them we are indebted for exiling our forefathers; but these Stuarts have no claim on our love. To Cromwell, on the other hand, may be traced the peace and security which for a short period were enjoyed by the Pilgrims and adventurers in their perilous enterprise of establishing themselves, and of creating governments better for them than the Government from which they fled; and to Cromwell may be traced, through papers and letters which now exist, the kind wish to remove to a more congenial place the suffering colonists. Happily, the scheme failed, but its failure detracts nothing from the benevolence of the Protector. He alone of all English sovereigns pursued a wise and kind policy toward the colonies of America; and if Massachusetts and Connecticut allow the year 1899, the anniversary of Cromwell's birth, to pass without erecting monuments of some sort to perpetu-

ate his name, that duty will be done in 1999, if there are then in New England men who can recognize ability, goodness, heroism, and also recognize a debt due to the most neglected, the most defamed, and yet one of the most illustrious of Englishmen.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### LATER DOMESTIC LIFE.

FROM the year 1640, when Cromwell left Ely for London, to the spring of 1654, when the royal apartments of Whitehall were assigned him as his residence, his domestic life was constantly interrupted; and for this period there is little to be related, except in connection with domestic duties, which, in the case of his son Richard, occupied a great deal of thought and time. There are no records of visits to the home where he had left his family, and but few records of his life when he was in London. For a time, previous to 1646, he appears to have lived in lodgings in Drury Lane, then a fashionable quarter; and some time during that year he took a house in King Street, not far from the Abbey. To this house he brought his family, or a part of

it. The next change probably was to the Cock-pit, a part of Whitehall. Oliver's Dunbar letter to his wife, dated September, 1654, indicates that she was living there, and it was in that house, not in the royal rooms of Whitehall, that the famous conference, preceding the breaking up of the Long Parliament, was held in April, 1653.

It was an interesting family that Oliver could gather at his side in his hours of leisure; an aged mother, a wife "dearer than any creature," four daughters, and his sons, Richard and Henry. The name of Richard is not a pleasant one to meet on the pages of English history; but, after all, Richard was a good specimen of a clever, agreeable Englishman, a clubbable sort of young man. The chief fault to be found with him is that he was not strong enough, not able enough, to carry his father's constable baton. Carlyle, without mercy, scornfully surnames him, "Poor Idle Triviality;" but Carlyle, we know, was not sparing of his adjectives or black paint when he really disliked one. Henry was an able man, and possibly had the baton fallen to him, he would have established a House of Cromwell to last as long as the Plantagenet, or Tudor, or Stuart houses.

All the daughters were married when young. Elizabeth became Mrs. Claypole. Bridget became the wife of Ireton, a brave soldier and an able writer; he was left by Cromwell in Ireland as his deputy, and there he died. Mary and Frances, "two little wenches," as Oliver calls them, whom he wants to provide for when he is arranging Richard's marriage money contracts, were young enough to enjoy the glories of the royal parts of Whitehall, at its occupation. They were there two or three years, when the "musical, glib-tongued Mary" (whom Dean Swift pronounced handsome, and like her father), was married to Lord Fauconberg; and "poor little Fanny," after much trouble and perplexity (some jealous lover having put it into His Highness's head that Rich was not just the right kind of a man), to the son of Lord Rich.

These domesticities, of which history contains but few records, but in which Oliver, a loving father, shared, were preceded by Richard's marriage to Dorothy Mayor, in 1649. Touching this matter and touching Richard, we find in Carlyle's book nineteen letters which illustrate Cromwell's character and give an idea of him as a business man. His patience, his anxiety, his fair and open dealing, his generosity, his thought

for his two little girls — then about ten and twelve years old — are seen distinctly in his correspondence. He is too busy a man to see Mr. Mayor, Dorothy's father ; has too much to do in Parliament, and in preparation for the second civil war, to leave time for going to Hursley ; and so Oliver gets Colonel Norton, "Dick Norton," and other friends, to manage the matter.

In his first letter to the colonel he writes that he has had "an offer of a great proposition from a father of his daughter, yet I rather incline to this" (the Mayor alliance) "in my thoughts ; because, though the other be very far greater, yet I see different ties, and not that assurance of Godliness, though, indeed, of fairness."

He declines, then, the great offer, and proceeds to get his son married into a family which has no rank, and but little property. "The consideration of piety in the parents," he writes to Norton, and "such hopes of the gentlewoman in that respect make the business to me a great mercy."

O, Oliver ! should your like appear in the domestic marrying world of this year, 1892, he would be looked upon as a pious prodigy. A place, perhaps, would be found for him by one of our ambitious religious organizations at the Columbian Chicago Exposition.



Whether Oliver managed to get time to go to the wedding, this writer does not know; but after he had got his army ready for Ireland, and was on his way with it, he wrote at Bristol, July 12, 1649, to Mr. Mayor, that he is "very glad to hear that our children have so good leisure to make a journey to eat cherries." Richard and Dorothy have evidently been off on a little pleasure excursion. In this letter Oliver writes, "I have delivered my son up to you, and I hope you will counsel him; he will need it. . . . I hope I shall have your prayers in the business to which I am called." The business was the war in Ireland.

A few days later, "From aboard the John," he writes to his "beloved daughter" Dorothy, "I do entirely love you, . . . and I hope a word of advice will not be unwelcome, nor unacceptable to thee." The advice touches religion. "I desire you both to make it, above all things, your business to seek the Lord," etc. This does not confirm the impression that Cromwell entirely parted with his piety when he became a great man.

Let us now try to get a glimpse of Whitehall as it was in Oliver's day. There was no Mr. Pepys in the gallery of the banqueting-room to give us such vivid sketches as he left of the

garish beauties and the gay cavaliers who surrounded His Sacred Majesty, Charles II., a few years later; but there are pictures in Thurloe's "State Papers" worth reproducing, and with what we know of the men who resorted to Oliver, and when we think of the household there — of Elizabeth Claypole, of the old mother, of the dear wife, of Oliver himself, and others — it is easy to create pictures of the scenes in that Protectorate palace.

Thurloe, in one of those enormous volumes which good Sir Walter Scott has told us the value of in his day, has a letter written by one of the Dutch ambassadors, Jongestall, to His Excellency, William Frederick, Earl of Nassau, containing an account of a dinner given to the three Dutch ambassadors at Whitehall, on the proclaiming of peace, April 27, 1654. If the old dates are correct, this dinner was given just a fortnight after Mrs. Cromwell had taken her place in the royal establishment; and rather an anxious time it must have been for her. The old mother was yet alive, and bright enough to be interested in what was going on; but she evidently did not accompany the Lady Protectress to the dinner table; and yet, though verging to her ninety-fourth year, she very likely caught the

sound of her son's voice when he was singing after the feast. Perhaps that sound carried her back to the Huntingdon home, and Oliver's boyhood. It was a remarkable diplomatic festive gathering in that one particular of the Protector's giving out a metrical psalm, by lines, and leading the singing himself.

How he got on with the Paris ambassadors, at dinner, when they came to London, history does not tell us; but he certainly would omit psalm singing with Cardinal Mazarin's nephews, or with any representatives of Louis XIV. These pious Dutch ambassadors, however, liked it.

Jongestall's letter is dated April 28. "Yesterday," he writes, "about one o'clock in the forenoon, the peace was proclaimed before Whitehall, Temple Bar, Paul's Church, and the Old Exchange. That same day, at night, the guns went off at the Tower, and aboard the ships three times, and bonfires were made, according to the custom of the country, before Whitehall, up and down the city. We did the like on the back side of our houses, toward the river, and burned near eighty pitch barrels; and we had trumpeters and others to play all the while. The river was so full of boats that there was hardly any water to be seen; at the same time several lords and ladies

of quality came to see us, whom we treated. In sum, all things were done here in great solemnity. God Almighty give us further blessing to this great work! Yesterday, at noon, we were invited to dinner, by His Highness, the Lord Protector, where we were nobly entertained. Mr. Strickland and the master of ceremonies came to fetch us in two coaches of His Highness, about half an hour past one, and brought us to Whitehall, where twelve trumpeters were ready sounding against our coming. My Lady Nieuport and my wife were brought to His Highness presently; the one by Mr. Strickland, and the other by the master of ceremonies, who received us with great demonstrations of amity. After we staid a little, we were conducted into another room where we found a table ready covered. His Highness sat on one side of it alone; my Lord Beverning, Nieuport and myself at the upper end, and the Lord President Lawrence and others next to us. There was in the same room another table, covered, for other Lords of the Council, and others. At the table of my Lady Protectrice dined my Lady Nieuport, my wife, my Lady Lambert, my Lord Protector's daughter" (Elizabeth) "and mine. The music played all the while we were at dinner. The Lord Protector

had us into another room where the Lady Protectrice and others came to us, where we had also music and voices, and a psalm sung which His Highness gave us, and told us that it was yet the best paper that had been exchanged between us; and from thence we were had into a gallery next the river, where we walked with His Highness about half an hour, and then took our leaves, and were conducted back again to our houses after the same manner we were brought."

Jongestall adds, in a postscript, that the Lord Protector showed a great deal of kindness to his wife and daughter. This picture of Jongestall's lacks the fine touches and the colorings of a historical novelist like Scott, but it has, at least, the merit of accuracy.

Within three weeks of the time of this dinner, the domestic life of the Whitehall household was disturbed by a plot for the assassination of the Protector. It was arranged that on Saturday, the twentieth of May, when on his way in his coach to Hampton Court, thirty men should attack his guards, kill him, and proclaim Charles king. But it happened, much to the comfort of Mrs. Cromwell and the children, some of whom would probably have taken the drive with their father on that pleasant May day, that Thurloe,

who was Argus-eyed, was able to seize five of the plotters "in the very birth-time of their hour." A capital scheme, but one may read, in the moldy folios of Rushworth, lamentations over the fate of some of the conspirators. Somerset pleaded guilty and was saved; Gerrard and Vowel were executed.

One of the chief occupations of European kings, for centuries past, has been recreation, and particularly in the line of killing animals and birds. Louis XVI., a prisoner in Paris, deeply regretted the loss of his gaming privileges; Pepys, seeking Charles II. to consult about naval matters, would find that the king had gone to hunt. The history of rulers for three hundred years, apart from war, is mainly the history of diversions. Not so with Oliver. He once, however, we know, went hawking, and once went on a picnic. The picnic was in Hyde Park, a more quiet and secluded place two hundred years ago than now. He took Thurloe and a few friends with his six new horses, a gift of the Duke of Oldenburg, and after a lunch attempted to drive himself, with the results of injury to Thurloe, to himself, and the discharge of a pistol which he carried. There were no newspaper reporters around at the time of this

accident; but the three solid Dutch ambassadors, who still lingered in London after their famous dinner, wrote to the States General the full particulars, which can be read in the Thurloe "State Papers." Carlyle says: "Small anecdote that figures larger than life in all the books and biographies. I have known men thrown from their horses on occasion, and less noise made about it, my erudite friend. But the essential point was, His Highness wore a pistol. Yes, His Highness is prepared to defend himself; has men, and also . . . devils and devils' servants of various kinds to defend himself against, and wears pistols, and what other furniture, outward and inward, may be necessary to that object."

The court at Whitehall, in the time of the Protectorate, must have presented scenes to an observer's eye quite in contrast with those at St. Germain's, and in most of the palaces of Europe. The age was one when the keeping of a mistress or two by a ruler, however pious and devoted to the church he might be, seemed to be expected. That was almost the universal rule; and in one case a king, who loved his wife only, is said to have conformed to it in deference to public opinion.

No reflection on Oliver in this particular of

hastity is now reproduced by historians ; and it is only necessary to recall those who resorted to Whitehall, to know that the banqueting-room, so polluted in Charles's time of the "unspeakable mercies," was white and clean in the Protector's day. With the exception of Thurloe, Mr. John Milton was, probably, as often there as any other man ; often on business, often for recreation ; for music, of which the immortal poet and his companion, Oliver, were very fond. The Rev. John Wheelwright, his old foot-ball playmate, dropped in on Oliver at Whitehall, and other New England Puritans were visitors there. Thurloe, who kept a spy in every court of Europe, even in Charles's little movable court, was of course a constant visitor ; and if he and Oliver, when plots were on foot, got off by themselves and had a quieting pipe together, who can blame them ? It is related that Dryden, whose lines we have quoted, was a guest ; but the less said about him now, in this connection, the better. The light of Whitehall was Elizabeth Claypole, Oliver's daughter, in whom he had garnered up his heart — a sweet and beautiful woman.

It is easy to fill, in the mind's eye, this Whitehall Palace with the great and prominent men of the time. Some bishops (Low Church ones)



were there, doctors of divinity, professors from the universities, solid learned lawyers, admirals — Blake among them — army officers, foreign ambassadors, etc.

There was one inmate of Whitehall who calls for a page in this narrative — Oliver's old mother, who is said to have given him some of his best traits of character. She was now ninety-four years old, but her mental faculties were but little obscured. Every day, it is related, her kind, affectionate son visited her in her room. Every day she wished to see his face and to hear his voice. To her he was not the great captain of Dunbar, nor the invincible conqueror whom all the sovereigns of Europe feared; he was her Oliver, her boy, her only one, the pet of the old Huntingdon home. He sits and talks with her, but not a word is said of war or parliaments; the talk is of the far past.

Memories sweet and dear are gone over again and again, and never seem to lose their interest: the kind father, long ago gone, who took his boy to Cambridge; the old house, the brook running near it; the winter evenings when Doctor Beard and others came in for a little talk; Cousin Hampden; yes, with tears and tender voice, good Uncle Oliver, godfather Oliver, and the pleasant

walks to Hinchinbrook. All the past, little of the present, is gone over. At last came a scene worth the vision of an angel. Oliver for the last time is by her side, and she is passing to the other life. She looks up and says, "My dear son, I leave my heart with thee ; good-night !" and dies. Tenderly, through nearly forty years of widowhood, this mother had been watched over and cared for by the most dutiful of sons, and now he lays her body in Westminster Abbey. She was a noble woman. Even royalists spoke kindly of her. Her picture is a pleasant one to look at. Her memory will be kept alive, for she was the mother of a hero.

But little is known of Oliver's domestic life in Whitehall, but much in regard to it may be inferred from his character, which shines out from his letters, speeches and kind actions with remarkable clearness. It may be doubted if there can be found a saint in the Roman calendar for whom so many positive proofs of goodness can be found. This will seem a strange statement to those who have looked upon him as a selfish, blood-thirsty, cruel man ; but between the time when he looked after poor old sick "Benson," and "divers poor people in ye work-house" of Ely, to the time when he saved Ormond from

the Tower and sent him back to Charles, the instances of his generous and pious acts are numerous and striking. We know Saint Louis, the best of the French saints, a man worth canonizing if any are ; but of his good deeds history does not record so many as can be indisputably placed to the credit of Oliver.

Our hero then, having been proved to be good outside of his house, we may infer that the domestic life in Whitehall, or rather what there could be of it, between the pranks of Anabaptists and the plots of royalist assassins, was a genial and pleasant life. We know that when Oliver drove out to Hampton Court, as he usually did on Saturdays, Elizabeth and his other children were sure of having a good time with their father. We can be sure that he had Dorothy's parents up from Hursley now and then, for a pleasant visit. We can be sure that music and singing were not limited to state occasions, and to those solid Dutch ambassadors. He was the possessor of a fine library, and that fact throws light on his private life. Amidst his pressing cares and duties he found some time for books. One can hardly think of him as a man having an eye for pictures ; but he is credited with having saved the paintings of Raphael. His own like-

ness, in the Dunbar time, he did not care to have taken, though an engraver had been sent four hundred miles, from London to Edinburgh, to put it on a medal. He was anxious, however, to have the engraver looked after and permanently employed ; and in his letter to the medal committee, Mr. Symonds, who had " made so great a journey about a business importing so little," was the main subject which enlisted his generous thought. Half the letter is about Symonds ; the Dunbar medal, with his face on it, awakens but little interest in his earnest and large soul. It must have been an annoyance to him to sit to Lely ; one can almost hear his tone, " paint me as I am." The " wart " may still be seen on the picture which hangs in Warwick Castle.

The Dutch dinner was not the only one given at Whitehall of which there is record in Thurloe. One day Oliver had a large company of clergymen, Dr. Owen and others, to dine with him, and an old writer says, " He sat at table with them, and was cheerful and familiar in their company." He did not, the reader will notice, sit alone on this occasion, as he was compelled by his office to do when ambassadors took dinner with him.

It must be remarked that this domestic life was going on amid the events described in an-

other chapter ; going on when Blake was blazing away with his guns at sea ; when the day of prayer was appointed, and the collection of money made for the persecuted Protestants of Piedmont ; when desperadoes were trying to get his head, and the large rewards which Charles had offered for it ; when private fast days were kept by Oliver and his council ; when judges were summoned to the " Painted Chamber " of Westminster to hear a sermon from Mr. Bridges ; when the slow judges of the Chancery Court, and the long-winded lawyers of Temple Bar, took quite a different view of the twenty-three thousand cases pending from that taken by Oliver, who desired that weary litigants should have their suits administered on with justice and purity, instead of being dragged along year after year for the benefit of those to whom their claims had been intrusted.

One of the Dutch ambassadors states in a letter that the Protector secured for the Piedmontese one hundred thousand pounds ; an overestimate, probably, but the amount was large ; equal certainly to any modern charity collection ; perhaps what a million dollars would be worth in our day. This was a part of Oliver's domestic life, an episode of the warrior's and statesman's

life. "Good-natured," writes Whitelocke. Yes; and more than that: pity for the distressed, help for those needing help, were with him unfailing. He had just the qualities which fit one to manage a modern humane society.

Another little flash of light is thrown on the domestic life by a letter dated June 17, 1657. Oliver writes to Fleetwood, his son-in-law, deputy in Ireland. "My dear Charles, my dear love to thee." Love to "my dear Biddy, who is a joy to my heart, . . . if the good of the public" will allow, "come over with your dear wife." He wants to see Biddy and Charles at Whitehall, but they must not come at the sacrifice of the good of the public. To one who will think a moment, that sportive nickname, "Biddy," will throw not a flash only, but a flood of light on Oliver. He is tired of ambassadors and Parliament men; he wants to have Biddy and Charles by his side. One of the Arnolds, if the writer remembers, has written something about our needing "light and sweetness." Now if ever a man and a father had those qualities, that stout Englishman, Oliver Cromwell, had them. Light and sweetness encircled his mother, his wife, all his children, and shone through his life to bless and comfort others.

A month after this letter was written, the "Banqueting-room" was "hung with arras," the galleries were "full of ladies," the Life Guards in their "gray frock coats with velvet welts," were making as good a show as possible; and the poor and to be pitied Lord Protector is seen standing on "a carpet with a chair of state behind him." A "brilliant Swedish gentleman ambassador, with numerous gilt coaches and innumerable outriders," has arrived in London, and it is necessary to give him audience. The ambassador saluted thrice as he advanced; "thrice lifting his noble hat and feathers as the Protector lifted his." Then followed the speeches. Oliver's was brief, but to the point. "My Lords, you are welcome into England. . . . I am very willing to enter into a nearer and more strict alliance and friendship with the king of Swedeland. . . . I shall nominate some persons to meet and treat with your lordships." This speech would be a good one for some of our modern diplomatists to imitate.

In that same year, a "learned Portuguese Jew," of Amsterdam, made his appearance at Whitehall, and to him Oliver gave a warm and hearty welcome. Four hundred years before the Jews had been banished from England, and

Oliver thought it was time to allow them to come back. So after a little private talk, and probably some hospitality, he got together his chief advisers to meet Manasseh Ben Israel, give him a hearing and see what could be done. One who was at the gathering relates that the Protector never spoke so well as when pleading for the banished Jews. He would open the arms of England and receive them back again. But, alas! the chief justices, most of the clergy and the "Scripture prophecies" were against the Protector, and the edict of banishment remained unchanged. Those musty folios, worth a penny a pound in the year 1831, tell us that some, and even some of the clergy, were with Oliver; but the majority carried the day against the Jews. It is pleasant, however, to know that Oliver, in his capacity as constable, managed to slip Jews into London, and to allow them a synagogue. Our old friends, the royalists, penetrate his motive. He wished to borrow money of the Jews. Oliver could get money enough at Amsterdam, or on the London Exchange, or, at a pinch, he could pull out a few royalist teeth; money was the least of Oliver's wants.

On the evening of the day when this conference touching the Jews was held, Oliver's



domestic life was interrupted by the appearance of Ludlow at Whitehall. He came from Ireland. Ludlow had no love for Oliver after the Protectorate began. He now comes to Whitehall to say that he will be peaceable "so long as he sees no chance otherwise;" that he will not try to upset the Government, unless a good opportunity occurs. The Protector permits him to reside in Essex, keeping his eye upon him.

And then came those wearisome weeks when Parliament disturbed the domestic life of Whitehall in the matter of kingship. No wonder that Oliver, distracted by the lawyers and forced to make antagonistic speeches, wished himself back to his old woodside and his sheep. Kingship settled in the negative, the next disturbance is the inauguration as Protector — the robe of purple velvet, the scepter of gold, the chair of state and more speech-making. One would like to know how the Constable felt, and what he said to his wife and children when he got back at evening from Westminster, and from this semi-royal symbolism.

The day was Friday, June 26, 1657, and after the ceremonies in the "Painted Chamber" the Government went on as before. We soon find Oliver writing to Lockhart to get Dunkirk; to

“divert the Spaniards from assisting Charles;” to “take boldness and freedom” in dealing with the French. Work, work is the business of Oliver. Shows, even his own inauguration, were not of much use to him. This was his second inauguration.

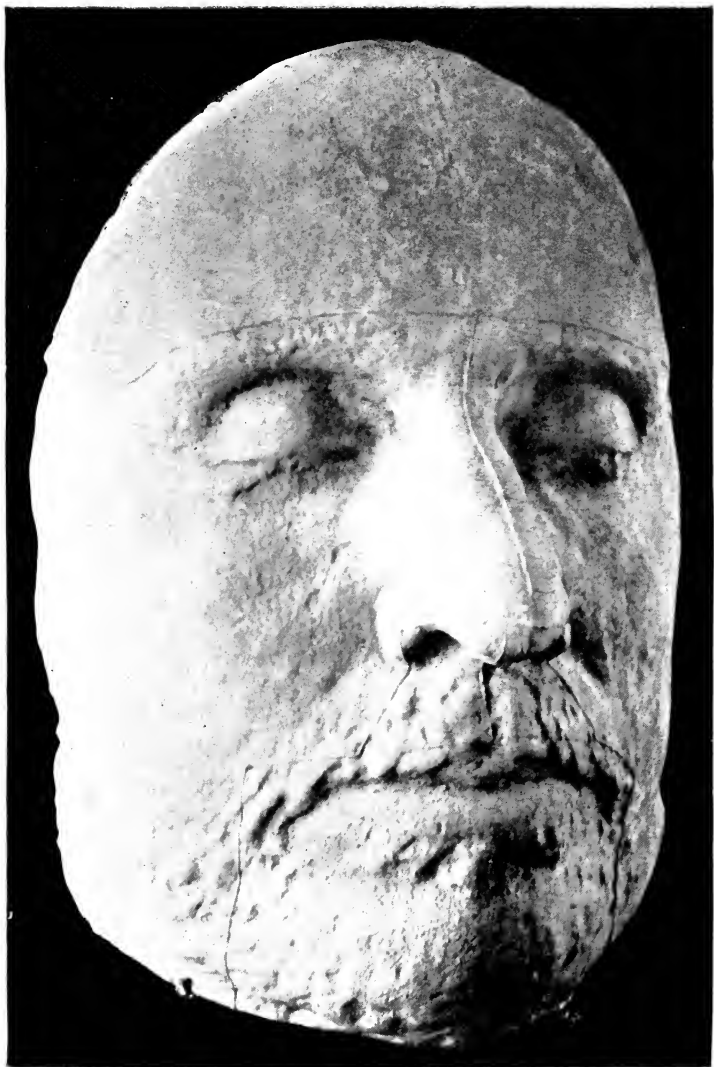
And now there is momentary brightness in the domestic life. In November, 1657, both the younger daughters were married. “The poor, little Fanny,” so troubled about her engagement, is now, according to old newspapers, the “most illustrious Lady Frances,” and she marries into the family of the Earl of Warwick. The earl himself, the Countess Dowager of Devonshire, and “many other persons of high honor and quality” went to the wedding. In the following week at Hampton Court, the “musical, glib-tongued” Mary was married. Beautiful, brightest days, to be soon followed by blackest nights; sunlit islands ere long to be submerged forever.

Between the time of these weddings and September 3, 1658, Oliver is watching the frantic and turbulent Anabaptists, the Duke of Ormond and royalist plotters. Four years have now gone since the Protector escaped the danger of the drive to Hampton Court, and again the “hydra” lifts its head, but lifts it only to be cut off, and

cut off for the last time. A night is appointed by the royalists, the night of May 15, 1658, to fire the houses at the Tower, and to overthrow the Government. But Thurloe's eyes are sleepless, and Cromwell's arm is still strong. The governor of the Tower, instead of putting out the fire of burning buildings, marches with artillery into the city; the noise which he makes, as his guns pass through the streets, is enough to drive the royalists to hiding-places. A few days later a court of justice, made up of all the judges and chief law officials, "a hundred and thirty heads," sat; and the Rev. Dr. Hewit and Sir Henry Slingsby are condemned to die; to others mercy is granted. Rushworth and other old writers deeply lament the death of these two men. "In those same June days," writes Carlyle, "while Hewit and Slingsby lay down their heads on Tower Hill, and the English hydra finds its master is still here, there arrives the news . . . of Dunkirk gloriously taken, Spaniards gloriously beaten; victories and successes abroad which are a new illumination to the Lord Protector in the eyes of England. Splendid nephews of the Cardinal, Manginis, Dukes de Créqui, come across the Channel to 'congratulate the most invincible of sovereigns;' young Louis XIV.

himself would have come, had not the attack of smallpox prevented." "Once more Oliver has saved Puritan England, and he looks with confidence toward summoning another Parliament of juster disposition toward Puritan England and him." "Not till Oliver Cromwell's head lie low shall English Puritanism bend its head to any created thing. Erect, with its foot on the neck of hydra Babylon, with its open Bible and drawn sword shall Puritanism stand, and with pious all-defiance victoriously front the world. That was Oliver Cromwell's appointed function in this piece of sublunary space, in this section of swift-flowing time, that noble, perilous, painful function; and he has manfully done it, and is now near ending it, and getting honorably relieved from it."

In the summer of 1658, a sorrow, falling close on other sorrows, the deaths of Rich and of the Earl of Warwick, fell with crushing power on the heart of our great hero. His eldest daughter, Elizabeth, Mrs. Claypole, fell sick at Hampton Court, and there she died. In Thurloe we read that for fourteen days Oliver was at her bedside, unable to attend to any public business; and Maidstone tells us, that "the sympathy of his spirit with his dying daughter did break him



OLIVER CROMWELL.

*(A cast from the original mask taken after death, now owned by Thomas Woolner, sculptor.  
It was given by him to Thomas Carlyle, who gave it in 1873 to Charles Eliot  
Norton, from whom Harvard College received it in 1881.)*



down." Strong and unmoved in the storms of the world, this father, clinging tenderly to his child until she died, was now prostrated; but with a broken heart and impaired health, he attempted to resume his duties. It was impossible. He was directed by his doctors to leave Hampton Court and go to London; but the change brought no benefit, and he died on September 3, 1658. "His time was come," wrote his friend Maidstone, "and neither prayers nor tears could prevail with God to lengthen out his life, and continue him longer with us." We will not linger over the closing scene. We let the curtain fall around his death-bed with the full belief that a whiter and purer spirit has seldom passed away from earth.

No place in England suggests so many buried enmities as Westminster Abbey. Side by side lie there entombed those who in life were deadly foes. We may pass within those walls, over the graves and amid the monuments of warriors, statesmen and rulers who hated each other while living, but who now rest together there in peace. The time, we believe, will come when the name of Oliver Cromwell will be inscribed in that Temple with the names of England's most illustrious men.

## CHAPTER IX.

### CROMWELL LETTERS.

OF the two hundred and thirty-three Cromwell letters which Carlyle has published, there is but one which is dated before the year 1635. This brief note is all that remains of what Oliver Cromwell wrote during the first thirty-six years of his life. It is addressed —

*To my approved good friend, Mr. Henry Downhall, at his chambers in St. John's College, Cambridge: These.*

HUNTINGDON, 14th October, 1626.

LOVING SIR:

Make me so much your servant as to be godfather unto my child. I would myself have come over to have made a formal invitation, but my occasions would not permit me; and therefore



hold me in that excused. The day of your trouble is Thursday next. Let me entreat your company on Wednesday. By this time it appears I am more apt to encroach upon you for new favors than to show you my thankfulness for the love I have already found. But I know your patience and your goodness cannot be exhausted by

Your friend and servant,

OLIVER CROMWELL.

Of this letter, the first in his Appendix, Carlyle says: "It is of the last degree of insignificance, a mere note of invitation to Downhall to stand 'godfather unto my child;' man-child, now ten days old, who, as we may see, is christened on Thursday next by the name of Richard." For once in his life Carlyle is wrong. The letter, or note, is not insignificant. On the contrary, it is far more worth commenting on than scores of the letters to which much space is given. Carlyle was not in good humor when he wrote his Appendix. After his work was, as he thought, finished, with its hundred and fifty-five letters, he made a Supplement, with its fifty-three letters, and made it reluctantly. He would not re-cast his book to admit new letters. "To unhoop your

ask again," he says, "and try to insert new staves when the old ones, better or worse, do already hang together, no cooper will recommend." But after the Supplement came still other letters, and an Appendix seemed necessary. This was too much for Carlyle's patience, and so we have the sarcastic comments: "Mere note to Downhall," "Man-child now ten days old . . . christened Richard."

The mere name of "Richard" was enough to put the great elucidator off his balance. Now the only letter known to be in existence written within the first thirty-six years of the life of so remarkable a man as Oliver Cromwell, even had it no intrinsic value, should have had better recognition. But the letter is one worth noticing. Few adepts at composition, in our age of culture, could write so graceful a note, or put so much in so small a compass. It throws much light on Oliver, the young farmer. The letter shows that Oliver is a very busy man. He has not time to travel the fifteen miles to Cambridge, and give a formal invitation. It shows that he is still in connection with the Episcopal Church. It shows that he has the spirit of hospitality; he urges Downhall to come the day before the baptism, evidently wants to have a good time with

his friend. Favors received from Downhall are acknowledged in the most delicate way. The brevity of the letter is characteristic of the man who wrote it. Seldom is so much civility, good breeding and courtesy indicated within so small a space.

Curiously enough, Carlyle exhausts himself in his usual way of all that he knows about Downhall. Tells how Downhall came of gentlefolks, was made a Fellow of St. John's, Cambridge, on the twelfth of April, 1614, had known Oliver two years after that, and had probably been helpful to him; how, in later years, he became an Anti-Puritan Malignant; how, surviving the restoration, he became Archdeacon of Huntingdon in 1667, fifty-one years after he had lodged there as Oliver Cromwell's guest and gossip. All this is told, but Oliver's letter, the only extant letter written before he was thirty-six years old, preserved for more than two hundred years, "is of the last degree of insignificance." Richard and the "ugly labor" of the Appendix evidently disturbed Carlyle, and he failed to see the value of the letter.

The next extant letter from Oliver's pen was written nine years later, in 1635, and that was a letter written for charity, in the interest of one

Dr. Wells, who seemed likely not to get paid for his preaching.

The third letter is given in full.

*To Mr. Hand at Ely: These.*

ELY, 13th September, 1638.

MR. HAND:

I doubt not but I shall be as good as my word for your money. I desire you to deliver forty shillings of the town money to this bearer, to pay for the physic for Benson's cure. If the gentlemen will not allow it at the time of account, keep this note, and I will pay you out of my own purse. So I rest

Your loving friend,

OLIVER CROMWELL.

This letter also is in the Appendix. Carlyle comments: "Poor Benson is an old invalid. Mr. Hand's disbursements for him in 1836, were £2. 7. 4. . . . To Benson at divers times, £0. 15. 0." "Let him have forty shillings more, and if the gentlemen won't allow it, Oliver Cromwell will pay it out of his own purse."

These three letters were, with one exception, all that were discoverable fifty years ago by Carlyle of a date prior to 1639. Two of the letters

relate to charities; to interests that were unselfish, and the same kind feeling for others which is indicated in them is a noticeable peculiarity of Oliver's late life. His generosity no one who looks into his character, can for a moment doubt.

The fourth letter suggests the charge often made and even now repeated, that in regard to religion Cromwell was a hypocrite. The date is October 13, 1638, and the letter is addressed to his cousin, Mrs. St. John, the wife of the great barrister. Within the space of this book, it is impossible to give many quotations, or to make extended comments on the letters. Readers must go to the letters and Carlyle's remarks on them, in order to have a real appreciation of the man who "once walked with God," and whose life was "girdled with Eternities and Godhoods." It must suffice to say that this fourth letter of Oliver's came from a soul full of gratitude to the Almighty, and that nearly all the subsequent letters of a domestic kind, and not a few of the letters relating to the war, up to near the end of his life, are written in precisely the same spirit.

Fourteen and fifteen years later he writes, in Whitehall Palace, at a time when England is "in huge travail throes," to his son-in-law, Fleetwood, commander-in-chief of the forces in Ireland, long

letters which have in them almost nothing but piety, reverence of the Supreme, and love of Christ. From Edinburgh, in 1651, he writes to his wife, "the great good thy soul can wish is, that the Lord lift upon thee the light of his countenance, which is better than life." In another letter he expressed the wish "to get a heart to love and serve his Heavenly Father better." "Pray for me," he says, "truly I do daily for thee." No hypocrite, thirty years married, would write in this way to his wife; and what possible advantage could come to a man by writing private family letters, through a long course of years, about God and the soul, if he did not believe in these entities? The charge of hypocrisy is as false as all the other defamatory charges. But it may be said that Cromwell's letters to his wife prove nothing as to his religious character; that a man may write piously to his wife, while she knows better than any one else that he is playing a part; but it happens, in this case, that we know what Elizabeth Cromwell thought of her husband after she had lived with him for thirty years. It happens that one letter which she wrote to Oliver has been kept through the centuries; only one, dated December 27, 1650. It begins "My dearest," and this passage, which

ought to settle forever this hypocrisy slander, is in it. "I should rejoice to hear your desire in seeing me, but I desire to submit to the Providence of God; hoping the Lord, who hath separated us, and hath often brought us together again, will in his good time bring us again to the praise of his name. Truly, my life is but half a life in your absence, did not the Lord make it up in himself, which I must acknowledge to the praise of his grace."

About three months before the writing of this letter, Oliver, on the day after the battle of Dunbar, wrote to Elizabeth, and he too begins with "My Dearest." This letter is a short one, and is given in full.

*For my beloved wife, Elizabeth Cromwell, at the Cockpit: These.*

DUNBAR, 4th September, 1650.

MY DEAREST:

I have not leisure to write much. But I could chide thee, that in many of thy letters thou writest to me, that I should not be unmindful of thee and thy little ones. Truly, if I love you not too well, I think I err not on the other hand much. Thou art dearer to me than any creature; let that suffice. The Lord hath shown

us an exceeding mercy; who can tell how great it is. My weak faith hath been upheld. I have been, in my inward man, marvelously supported, though I assure thee I grow an old man and feel the infirmities of age stealing upon me. Would my corruption did as fast decrease. Pray on my behalf in the latter respect. The particulars of our late success Harry Vane or Gilbert Pickering will impart to thee. My love to all dear friends. I rest thine,

OLIVER CROMWELL.

This letter indicates that Elizabeth wrote many letters, and that she was rather disturbed that her husband did not write her oftener. "I have not leisure," he tells her, "to write much." He chides her for intimating that he has been unmindful of her and the little ones; "thou art dearer to me than any creature." He has some difficult work to do in Scotland, which his wife probably did not fully appreciate.

Four or five letters only, which passed between this loving couple during the nearly forty years of their married life, are all that remain; the rest are gone. These letters are sweet and beautiful.

When it is stated that there are of the Crom-



well letters one hundred and four relating to war, twenty and more relating to kind friendly purposes or acts outside of his family, that two of his letters to Richard can be read, and that nineteen of the letters, which the patient, anxious father wrote about, or in the interests of, this son, have survived; that there are nineteen letters addressed to the Scots, and no small number of miscellaneous letters, it is evident that a book rather than a chapter is needed in order to do justice to them. Of the war letters nothing shall be said excepting that many writers, including the royalist, Sir Walter Scott, have acquitted Cromwell of bloodthirstiness. Cromwell fought as Grant and Sherman and Lee fought—to effect an object; not for love of war.

The letters written with a view to conferring favors or giving comfort, must be disposed of briefly. One is addressed to Thomas Knyvett, asking him to look after his “honest, poor neighbors,” who are in some trouble and are likely to be put to more by Robert Brown, one of Knyvett’s tenants; one to Colonel Walton asking him to forget his private sorrow in remembering that his son, who had fallen in battle, is “a saint in Heaven;” one is an appeal to Lord Fairfax for a poor widow, whose husband on his death-

bed had asked that "I should befriend his wife and children to the Parliament or to your Excellency;" one is to the keeper of the library at St. James, telling him to let Sir Oliver Fleming have "two or three such books as he shall choose;" one to his worthy friend Dr. Love, of Cambridge, asking him that he will look out for the interests of Mrs. Nutting in connection with a lease; one is to the Hon. William Lenthall, asking of the Parliament "justice and charity" for a person whose estate has decayed by the war; one is to Colonel Hacker, praying that Captain Empson may be "lovingly received," and that Captain Hubert, who is to be disappointed in the matter of an appointment in the army service, may be told that "I shall not be unmindful of him," and that "no disrespect is intended for him" (a graceful, kind thing for Hubert); one is to secure an office in a custom house, "in the customs," for a young man who is "an object of pity," and has "poor parents;" another is in the interest of Mr. Draper, a clergyman who wants to get a parish; one is to the Lord Mayor of London in behalf of the Rev. Mr. Turner, who the Protector thinks is a fit person to hold the vicarage of Christ Church, Newgate Street; and one is to Dr. Greenwood,

Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, requesting that Mr. Waterhouse may have the degree of Doctor of Medicine conferred on him.

Rather a dull page this, does the reader say; not one of these names is known to him; he cares nothing about these persons? Well, they were living two hundred and fifty years ago; had flesh and bones and feelings, then: were in trouble, had leases to make, had sorrows, felt poverty's keen touch, had lost property in the wars, wanted to get books out of a library and could not get them without an order, desired promotion in the army, wished to get a place in the custom house, had families to support, had plenty of sermons but no call to a parish, hoped for a title from a college, just as men do now; and Oliver Cromwell helped them — helped them all; got them out of their difficulties, secured them places and support, befriended them.

These were a few of the thousands of little things that occupied Oliver's attention and drew out his sympathy; but they give an idea of the quality of the man. He was willing to put himself to the trouble of aiding those who needed help; not a universal gift even in these modern enlightened times in which we live.

It is remarkable that in all these Cromwell

letters, so many of which were private letters, and which, doubtless, were like thousands which he wrote, there is not to be found a line indicating self-exaltation; not a word to show that he thought himself to be a man superior to his fellows. In this particular his correspondence is a strange revelation, and the fact is the more noticeable when we remember that he was only an obscure farmer until he was more than forty years old. Conscious of his superiority he must have been, but he never reveals his knowledge of it.

To illustrate further Oliver's character, another letter must be given. A story was started that he had concealed himself in his house in order to avoid the visits of a gentleman who had called on him. On hearing this he wrote the following letter;

*To my honored friend, Anthony Hungerford,  
Esquire : These.*

COCKPIT, 10th December, 1652.

SIR :

I understand by my cousin Dunch of so much trouble of yours, and so much unhandsomeness (at least seeming so) on my part, as doth not a little afflict me, until I give you this account of

my innocence. She was pleased to tell my wife of your often resorts to my house to visit me, and of your disappointments. Truly, Sir, had I but once known of your being there, and "had concealed myself," it had been an action so below a gentleman or an honest man, so full of ingratitude for your civilities I have received from you, as would have rendered me unworthy of human society. Believe me, Sir, I am much ashamed that the least color of the appearance of such a thing should have happened, and I could not take satisfaction but by this plain dealing for my justification, which I ingenuously offer you. And although Providence did not dispose other matters to our satisfaction [referring perhaps to an offer of marriage for Richard] yet your nobleness in that overture obligeth me, and I hope ever shall while I live, to study upon all occasions to approve myself your Family's and your

Most affectionate and humble servant,

OLIVER CROMWELL.

My wife and I desire our service be presented to your Lady and Family.

This letter was preserved in the old chest of Farley Castle, the mansion of the Hungerfords,

and it surely was worth keeping. It is a most graceful apology for a seeming offense.

The letters which Oliver wrote to Mr. Mayor and others, in connection with Richard's marriage to Dorothy Mayor, are given with their dates, and a strange contrast they make with the war documents, with which, in Carlyle's *Cromwell*, they are mingled. What Carlyle thought of Richard is here more clearly indicated than in his remarks on the invitation to the baptism.

Oliver writes at London, April 6, 1649 ( busy at that time preparing for Ireland), to Mr. Mayor: "My son had a great desire to come down and wait upon your daughter. I perceive he minds that more than to attend to business here." Carlyle puts a star at the end of this sentence, and at the bottom of the page the star directs the reader to his brief summing up of his opinion as to Richard; simply this: "The dog." Still Carlyle gives all the Richard letters which he can lay his hands on; and these letters, though mainly relating to the business parts of the marriage arrangements, bring out in striking ways Cromwell's noble character.

A part of a letter sent to Mr. Mayor some time after the marriage is worth quoting. We ask the reader of it who believes that Cromwell

was a canting hypocrite to reflect on it, and to ask himself what possible motive the writer could have had for enlightening Mr. Mayor as to his thoughts and feelings. The letter was written for Mayor, and for him alone, and Mayor was only a country gentleman who could be of no use to Oliver, except in friendship. This letter is in itself a complete refutation of the charge of hypocrisy which stands now against Cromwell in hundreds of histories, in scores of poems, in not a few novels, and which has been repeated in nearly all English school history books for two hundred years.

The letter is dated July 17, 1650, and was written when Cromwell was on his way to Scotland and to Dunbar battle. "You are all often in my poor prayers. . . . Oh! how good it is to close with Christ betimes; there is nothing else worth looking after. I beseech you, call upon him. I hope you will discharge my duty and your own love. You see how I am employed. I need pity. I know what I feel. Great place and business in the world is not worth the looking after. I should have no comfort in mine, but that my hope is in the Lord's presence. I have not sought these things; truly I have been called unto them by the Lord, and therefore am not without some assurance that he will enable

his poor worm and weak servant to do his will, and to fulfill my generation. In this I desire your prayers.

Your very affectionate brother,

OLIVER CROMWELL.

Has the reader noticed Cromwell's way of greeting his friends in his letters? noticed his "loving sir" to Downhall, his "affectionate brother" to Mayor, and your "loving friend" in the note to Mr. Hand about poor, sick Benson? The thing is worth noting, if one cares to measure the heart of the man. The addresses and the warm signatures of his letters alone are enough to make one, who prefers goodness and sweetness to greatness, cling to Oliver and love him.

Again and again, in his speeches before Parliament, Oliver asserted that he had not sought the place he was in, and here we have in the foregoing letter the same assertion, written just after he had been made general-in-chief; a letter which John Dunch, who married Dorothy Mayor's sister Anne, found, with sixteen other letters, when he was "groping about Hursley," Richard Mayor's home. These seventeen letters Dunch laid up in Pusey, in Berkshire, his home. After



“a century or so, Horace Walpole, a collector of letters, got his eye on them,” and “here they still are and continue,” thanks to John Dunch and Horace Walpole and Thomas Carlyle.

There are in the collection of letters no Cambridge letters to Oliver’s father, no letters to his mother, none to his sisters, or to his daughters, excepting one to Bridget Ireton, and there are but two addressed to his son Henry. Henry became Lord Deputy in Ireland, and he held that place till the end of the Protectorate. Had he, instead of his brother Richard, succeeded his father, Macaulay’s dream of a permanent House of Cromwell might have been a reality.

The two letters to Henry contain advice touching the administration of the Government in Ireland. In one of them he writes: “I do believe there may be some particular persons who are not very well pleased with the present condition of things, and may be apt to show their discontent as they have opportunity; but this should not make too great impressions in you. Time and patience may work them to a better frame of spirit, and bring them to see that which for the present seems hid from them, especially if they shall see your moderation and love toward them if they are found in other ways toward you,

which I earnestly desire you to study and endeavor all that lies in you. Whereof both you and I shall have the comfort, whatsoever the issue and event shall be.

Your affectionate father,

OLIVER P.

Not long after the day of Dunbar a medalist was sent by the "Honorable, the Committee of the Army," at London, to Edinburgh to take a copy of Oliver's face for a medal commemorative of the battle. This attention calls out a characteristic letter.

GENTLEMEN :

It was not a little wonder to me that you should send Mr. Symonds so great a journey about a business importing so little, so far as it relates to me.

He then suggests that the medal be engraved with the Parliament on one side and the army on the other, with this inscription over the head of it :

"The Lord of Hosts,' which was our word that day. Wherefore, if I may beg it as a favor from you, I most earnestly beseech you, if I may do it without offense, that it may be

so. And if you think not fit to have it as I offer, you may alter it as you see cause; only I do think I may truly say it will be very thankfully acknowledged by me if you will spare the having my effigies in it." And he ends his letter by kindly saying that the "pains and trouble of Mr. Symonds in making the long journey have been very great;" that Mr. Symonds is "ingenious and worthy of encouragement," and asking that they will please confer upon him "that employment which Nicolas Briot had before him." Cromwell's face on a medal does not appear to interest him in the slightest degree; but he wishes the poor medalist to secure some steady remunerative business. A remarkable letter this for a great general to write, but it is in harmony with his entire public and private life, so far as that life is revealed by his other letters, and by the charities in which he is known to have had a part.

There are two noteworthy letters to Cardinal Mazarin, the minister of Louis XIV. The first is dated June 9, 1653.

SIR:

I have been surprised that Your Eminency was pleased to remember a person so inconsiderable

as myself, living, as it were, withdrawn from the rest of the world.

Sir, Your Eminency's

Most humble servant,

OLIVER CROMWELL.

Some six weeks before Cromwell had broken up the Long Parliament, and three days before he issued his summons ("that the peace, safety and good government of the Commonwealth should be provided for") to the one hundred and forty Puritan notables "to whom the great charge and trust of so weighty affairs is to be committed."

In the speech which he made to the notables who formed what has been called the "Little Parliament," he says that he had done what "we have done . . . not to grasp at the power ourselves, or keep it in military hands, no, not for a day; but as far as God enabled us with strength and ability, to put it into the hands of proper persons that might be called from the several parts of the nation." At the end of the speech he tells the members that his council of officers have "no authority or continuance of sitting except simply until you take further orders." These transactions and these assertions throw light on the letter to Cardinal Mazarin.

The Lord General, as Carlyle says, "struggles to look upon himself as a man that has done with political affairs." He is a person "inconsiderable, living as it were withdrawn from the rest of the world" — from European politics, as well as from public service in England. Often, in his later speeches, does the Protector refer to this period of his life, when he hoped to be able to retire from employments under the Government.

The second letter to the cardinal is dated December 26, 1656. Cromwell is now Protector. He has widened his views somewhat. He is not the man which the Spanish Armada, the Thirty Years' War, the misgovernment of James I. and Charles I. had made him when he came up to the Parliament of 1640. He will take under his protection Jews, Anabaptists, Episcopalians and even Romanists, provided they do not interfere with his police work of keeping Prince Charles out of England. He now writes to Cardinal Mazarin that under his government the Catholics have less reason for complaint than they had under the Parliament. He has "plucked many out of the fire;" and it is his purpose to make a "further progress" as to toleration.

There are five letters written by Cromwell, and perhaps more, which crossed the Atlantic

and have been preserved: one to Rev. John Cotton; one to "our trusty and well beloved, the president, assistants and inhabitants of Rhode Island, together with the rest of the Providence plantations in the Narragansett Bay in New England;" one to Captain John Leverett, commander of the forts lately taken from the French in America; one to the Commissioners of Maryland; one to Richard Bennet, Esquire, Governor of Virginia. To the Rev. John Cotton, pastor of the church at Boston, he writes: "Truly I am ready to serve you and the rest of your brethren and churches with you."

The letter to Rhode Island is an answer to the request of its agent, asking that some particulars about the government may be settled. The Protector answers politely that he will attend to the matter when he has time; in the meanwhile "you are to proceed in your government according to the tenor of your charter." To Captain Leverett he writes: "to defend and keep the French forts, which Major Sedgwick has laid hold of" in the region now called Nova Scotia, then called Arcadie; of which forts and of the region which they commanded it is Oliver's purpose, for the benefit of his New Englanders, to retain possession. To the Commissioners of

Maryland he writes in the way of apology. Previous letters, he says, were "not intended to stop the proceedings of these commissioners, who were authorized to settle the civil government of Maryland." That was "not at all intended by us. . . . Our intention was only to prevent and forbid any force or violence to be offered by either of the plantations of Virginia or Maryland from one to the other upon the differences concerning their bounds, the said differences being then under the consideration of ourself and council here." To the Governor of Virginia he writes requiring him to forbear disturbing Lord Baltimore, or his officers or people in Maryland, and to "permit all things to remain as they were before any disturbance or alterations made by you or by any other, upon pretense of authority from you, till the said differences be determined by us here, and we give further order therein." Cromwell wrote also to the colonies of Connecticut, but those letters are lost. The purport of some of them may, however, be inferred from other letters which have been preserved.

It was known in Connecticut that Oliver had the purpose to remove such colonists as were dissatisfied in New England to a better place and climate. A letter, yet unpublished, was written

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in 1654, by the Rev. Mr. Higginson of Guilford, Conn., to the Rev. Mr. Thacher of Weymouth, Mass., relating to a removal. The letter gives a dark and gloomy picture of the prospects in New England. Although no letter written by Cromwell is now to be found in the Connecticut archives, there has been published by Carlyle a letter which indicates the Protector's wishes in this matter of a removal. The letter is dated October, 1655, and is addressed to Daniel Searle, Governor of Barbadoes. The Protector instructs the governor to remove the people of Barbadoes to Jamaica "where we have twenty men-of-war," and where "we hope the Plantation will not be wanting in anything. . . . We have also sent to the colonies of New England like offers with yours, to remove thither, our resolution being to people and plant that island." The scheme, so far as it related to the New England colonists, happily, did not mature. That beautiful island, about as large as the State of Connecticut, would have furnished rather narrow quarters even for the few settlers of the colonies, and it hardly would have sufficed for the descendants of the Puritans. Better, too, was New England, with its granite and its climate, than Jamaica with its alluvial soil, and its warm breezes.



These five or six letters bring Cromwell before us under new aspects. They indicate that he had the industry for which Lord Clarendon gives him credit; that he did not, like most of the English rulers from James I. to George III., have the inclination to disturb the colonists, and that he took a real interest in their welfare.

In his "Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers," Eliot Warburton, in allusion to the discovery of the letters of Charles I. at Naseby, says, if the letters of the "dark and crafty" Cromwell could be seen, how would he stand in comparison? Now, it happened that Carlyle, at the time when Warburton was writing his book, was gathering all that he could find of the letters of Cromwell. He gathered more than two hundred letters, covering a period of about thirty years; and in not one of these letters can a line be found in support of Warburton's contemptible insinuations. On the contrary, the letters show, for kindnesses done, for charities, for scrupulous thought in business matters, for devotion to distasteful but necessary work, a record which it would be difficult, if not impossible, to equal by the disclosure of an equal number of letters written by the statesmen, or rulers, or philanthropists now living in the Christian States of

America. So far from showing, as Warburton believed they would show, that Oliver was "dark and crafty," they prove beyond a doubt that in all the relations of life he was guided by truth, virtue, generosity and the noblest piety. No man outside of a royalist insane asylum can read those two hundred and thirty-three letters and not find in them all that belongs to a high and pure character. They reveal simplicity, modesty, complete disregard of self, deep interest in others, goodness of all kinds, largeness and nobleness of soul. Not a mean thing, nor an unjust one, can be found. Courtesy, delicacy equal to a woman's, love, all good qualities can be found in them; not one bad one, or the intimation of a bad one.

The greatest ruler of the seventeenth century was also the best and the noblest of the sovereigns who, in that age, governed Europe.

## CHAPTER X.

### CHARACTER.

THE only positive evidence, within the knowledge of the writer of this book, adverse to the good character of Oliver Cromwell, is found in the registry of the parish church at Huntingdon ; and this evidence, having apparently escaped the observation of royalists for two hundred years and more, was discovered by the Rev. Phillips Brooks, now the Bishop of Massachusetts, who a few years ago, while looking for the record of Oliver's baptism, found also a record which proves beyond a doubt that our hero did something wrong, and was in some way punished, in the year 1616, when he was seventeen years old. This offense, which in a previous chapter has been alluded to as one which should not leave a permanent stain on his memory, stands alone

among the charges unfavorable to Oliver's memory supported by evidence.

Other adverse charges are these: the pranks of boyhood, which need not detain us, and dissipation in early life. These are all, excepting that of cruelty in Ireland, which has been alleged by contradictory and untrustworthy royalist writers, and denied by those friendly to the Protector. Oliver's letters to the Irish people are a sufficient vindication. The charge of dissipation rests mainly on a few lines which Oliver wrote to a cousin when he was thirty-nine years old, in which he tells her that he had "loved darkness," and had been "the chief of sinners;" a strong way of stating his condition before conversion. There is not, so far as we can learn, the slightest evidence to prove that Oliver was ever dissipated, either in youth or in his after life; not the slightest evidence that there was a stain on him, from his early years up to the time when, at about the age of forty, he ceased to be a farmer, with the exception of the record in the book of the parish church at Huntingdon.

Oliver was brought up in a Low Church Episcopal family, and had such a family the slightest chance, in James's time, for peace and quiet in

its worship, he might have remained all through his life a good farmer Low Churchman, and slept at last "guiltless of his country's blood," in the graveyard of the old parish in which he was baptized. Who knows what influence Laud's appointment as Archdeacon of Huntingdon had over him? Who knows but that record of "discipline" in the old parish book may have changed the course of Oliver's life, and with it the course of English history?

It will be remembered that the quotations in the first chapter of this book from royalist writers contained no proofs of wickedness, or attempts at proofs; contained only assertions or intimations of wickedness. Not one fact is given by Cleaveland, or Clarendon, or other royalist writers in support of the infamous titles and names which they attach to the Protector. These writers simply published their opinions, gave their impressions, told, and perhaps honestly, what they thought of Cromwell; but in what they say there are no facts to show that he was the kind of man whom they represent him to have been. They brand him with scurrilous names, and that is all. He is, in their view, a "bankrupt," "a hypocrite," "a religious whiffler," "a mountebank of State," "a veiled

devil," "a subtle bloodsucker," and "a cannibal." One of them, it will be remembered, says that he had all the wickednesses against which damnation is denounced, and for which hell fire is prepared, but they relate nothing about him to substantiate this abuse, nothing to verify their allegations. Not an event of his private life is given for proof ; not one fact is alluded to, save those public acts which the greatest and best men of England shared with him, and to which Milton, both in prose and poetry, gave not only his sanction but his unlimited and warm approval.

Some of these vituperative writers, it must be remembered, had praised the Protector while he was living, or soon after he was dead ; they had placed him among the supreme men of this earth ; had admitted him to a Pantheon ; the censure was an after thought — an offering to His Sacred Majesty, the king. It was not to be expected that justice would be done to Cromwell by royalists in the age of Charles II. ; but it was not required of them so to defame him by lies as to shut him off from all sympathy for two hundred years. Other Puritans have had their offenses forgiven. Milton, the Protector's secretary and eulogist, has his place in the great Abbey.

Hampden has his statue in St. Stephen's Hall; Eliot and Pym are kindly remembered, but "our poor Oliver seems to hang yet on the gibbet, and find no hearty apologist anywhere." Is it not strange, says Carlyle, that after all the mountains of calumny this man has been subject to, after being represented as the Prince of Liars, who never, or hardly ever, spoke truth, but always some cunning counterfeit of truth, there should not yet have been one falsehood brought clearly home to him? "A prince of liars, and no lie spoken by him!"

We have quoted, in the first chapter, from writers who defamed Cromwell; we now give a few excerpts from those who wrote in his praise.

The first is taken from John Banks's book, a panegyric presented to the Protector by the Portuguese ambassador, "written as pretended by a learned Jesuit, His Excellency's chaplain, but as more probably supposd by the celebrated John Milton." "I persuaded myself that you either equaled, or at least came nearer to, than any other, the image of a perfect hero. . . . A nobility pure, free from all vanity, from all meanness, luxury, hautiness, vaunting of itself, clear, virtuous, brave, industrious. . . . Such a nobility as this, most illustrious Cromwell, we

have found to be yours, pure, solid, true, open, clear. . . . You have given us such a specimen of your capacity that you may make it appear, if you was (*sic*) disposed to go on in the pursuit of learning, how very able you are to equal the greatest masters, just as Julius Cæsar did, whose step you so nearly tread in. . . . Cincinnatus lived not more innocently, Serranus not more incorruptly, Cato not more justly. . . . Nor did you thrust yourself into honors, except only when the fortunes of the Commonwealth required your assistance. . . . You was (*sic*) dragged to dignities by a sort of violence. . . . Discerning, ready, judicious, valiant, deliberative, expeditious, sagacious, crafty, careful, attentive, you foresaw every accident, prevented the meditated blow, dared the greatest danger, eluded the most artful stratagem, embraced and improved every opportunity. Like lightning you struck before the thunder was heard. Great in fortitude as in council, you weighed the hazards of war, as if you feared them; you went through them as though you despised them. Before danger wary, in it undaunted. You arrogated nothing to yourself; you detracted nothing from others. The actions you demanded for your own part; but left the



fame of them to your fellows; the danger was yours, the glory theirs. . . . The magnanimity of Alexander, the valor of Camillus, the constancy of Scipio, the force of Cæsar, the skill of Belisarius, the fortitude of Scanderbeg, the violence of Gustavus Adolphus all unite in you; you excel all of them in that wherein they most excel. . . . You first brought religion into the army, and taught your soldiers to war most against vices and irregular desires. No general was ever more tender of his soldiers than you. You watched carefully against all their inconveniences and inquired into their necessities." Such was one estimate of Cromwell two hundred years ago.

We now give a small part of John Maidstone's letter to Governor Winthrop, which was written in 1659. Maidstone knew Cromwell well; knew him intimately, revered and loved him. He writes that the Protector had a head which was a vast storehouse, "a vast treasury of natural parts;" that his temper was exceedingly fiery, but that the flame of it was kept down or soon allayed by his moral endowments; that he was naturally compassionate toward objects in distress, even to an effeminate degree; that he did exceed in tenderness toward sufferers. "A

larger soul," writes Maidstone, "hath seldom dwelt in a house of clay than his was. I do believe, if his story were impartially transmitted and the unprejudiced world well possessed with it, she would add him to her nine worthies, and make that number *decem-viri*."

The Rev. Mr. Hooker, once a minister at New Haven, went to England in 1656. He became Oliver's chaplain. In a letter to Governor Winthrop dated April 13, 1657, he writes: "The Protector is urged *utrinque*" (about that kingship matter) "and I am ready to think willing enough to betake himself to private life, if it might be. . . . He is a godly man, much in prayer and good discourses, delighting in good men and good ministers, self-denying and ready to promote any good work for Christ." Mark, reader, that this testimony comes from one who knew Oliver near the end of his life, when it is commonly thought he had lost what little piety, and even affectation of piety, he had had in his earlier life.

Milton hails the Protector as the savior of England. He salutes him as men in our times have saluted Washington. He calls him not only "the chief of men," but, what is better, calls him "the father of his country." "This,"



OLIVER CROMWELL.

(From the celebrated print by W. Faithorne, London.)



Milton says, "is the tender appellation by which all the good among us salute you from the very soul;" and he closes a calm, just eulogy in these words: "While you, O Cromwell, are left among us, he hardly shows a proper confidence in the Supreme who distrusts the security of England."

A courtier from the court of Charles II., from Clarendon down to Bates, was not competent to measure Cromwell.

It is with peculiar pleasure that we give our readers the views of Samuel R. Gardiner, author of the "History of the Great Civil War." Mr. Gardiner says that "in forming a judgment on Cromwell it is absolutely necessary to take Carlyle's monumental work as a starting-point. Every satisfactory effort to understand the character of a man must be based on his own spoken and written words, though it is always possible to throw further light and shade from other sources." My comment on this is, at the risk of repetition, that there is not a line in any one of the Cromwell letters, nor a word in any one of the Cromwell speeches, which an advocate for his pure and noble character would wish to have erased. Warburton's "dark and crafty" hypocrite is undiscoverable in the letters and speeches.

After subjecting the writings of Cromwell's enemies, which are "to the last degree unfavorable to his uprightness of character, to the first rules of criticism" (the words are Gardiner's), this historian says: "It was with no little surprise that I found one charge after another melt away, as I was able to fix a date to the words or actions which had given rise to hostile comments. Thus tested, the Cromwell of Lilburne and Wildman shows himself the same man as the Cromwell of his letters and the Clarke papers; no divinely inspired hero, indeed, or faultless monster, but a brave honorable man, striving according to his lights to lead his countrymen into the paths of peace and godliness."

These words were written by Gardiner after he had spent seven years in his investigations; a much longer time than Carlyle spent on his work of Oliver.

It will be remembered that Carlyle, fifty years ago, did not know what he would make of Oliver, what kind of a man he would find him to have been; and now, one of the most prominent English historians expresses his surprise to find the charges against the Protector "melt away," and reveal Oliver as not only brave but honorable, and "leading his countrymen into the paths

of godliness." Rather remarkable testimony this as to Oliver's moral character! This historian also says that after the war was ended Cromwell clung with pertinacity to the old institutions of the realm; that it was Goffe more than Cromwell who proposed prayer meetings — that Oliver called for committees; that "among those who desired to give satisfaction to the king, Cromwell is undoubtedly to be reckoned;" that in a speech three hours long he held the attention of the House, pleading the cause of monarchy and urging the Parliament to re-establish the throne, asserting that it had been his aim during the whole war to strengthen and not destroy monarchy; that he would have Charles to be king as William III. was afterward a king; but that was a condition to which Charles would not stoop. "But the time came," says Gardiner, "when Cromwell found that all his efforts in the king's behalf were thrown away." Baffled by the House of Commons and unsupported by Charles, Cromwell's mediatory position became untenable.

In the army Cromwell was now denounced as a mere time-server, bent upon currying favor with Charles in pursuit of his own private interests. It was at this time that Cromwell himself wrote these words: "Though it may be, for the present,

a cloud may lie over our actions to those who are not acquainted with the grounds of them, yet we doubt not but that God will clear our integrity and innocency from any other ends we aim at but his glory and the public good."

There is one writer whom we cannot pass by, especially when we recall the animadversions of Guizot. Carlyle's Cromwell seems instantly to have made H. A. Taine, one of the ablest thinkers and writers of our day, a believer in Cromwell as a man "struck by the idea of duty." The view of this great Frenchman is wholly different from that of Louis Philippe's minister. Taine has discovered a hero worth recovering and bringing into sight; a noble heart beneath the rugged crust of Puritanism; a man with definite instincts and faculties; English to the core; a great soul like one of Shakespeare's. Taine sees that Carlyle has unearthed one of the noblest men of past centuries; that Cromwell has risen from the dead; that one can know now what he felt, suffered and wished; that he stands on things and not on the show of things; that he is a reality and not the harlequin of Charles's courtiers; that at last we are "face to face" with Cromwell; that we have his words, that we hear his tone of voice, and that now we "are firmly



planting our feet upon the truth." Cromwell comes forth to Taine's eye reformed and renewed. He quits his French ideas and finds this grand sentiment in Cromwell, "am I a just man?" He tells us that Oliver believed in a sublime and terrible God; that how to worship him was not a trifling thing.

In making an estimate of the man, we call upon our readers to note, in the first place, the complete absence of all positive bad qualities. You may search all the books about him from Bates and Dugdale down, all histories, poems, school text books, all his speeches and letters, and you cannot discover that he had at any time of his life one evil thought or purpose. To assert that he went through his nearly sixty years free from evil thoughts, would be absurd; but we do assert that no royalist has shown or can show a single deed emanating from a wicked purpose. Temper he had, and he had use for it; but apart from temper, such as was shown in the fen drainage business, and in breaking up the Long Parliament, it is impossible for any defamer to prove that he had any moral weakness or infirmity.

Buckle has remarked that only "two other men have done what Oliver succeeded in doing;

only Julius Cæsar and Napoleon I. ; these three alone have combined great soldiership with successful statesmanship."

We do not wish to linger over a statement like this. It awakens no emotions or pleasant thoughts.

One epithet to be found in Canon Kingsley's writings, "dear old Oliver Cromwell," is of more value than this praise from the author of the "History of Civilization." It is not Oliver's greatness which interests us. We have said little about that in these pages ; we care to say but little about it. It is not the great whom we cling to ; it is the good, the true, the noble, the pure, the kind, the loving. Cromwell's elevation from a farming life to the rank of the world's conquerors, and to a place by the side of kings, inspires no particular sympathy for him ; it is the man himself, the deep clear soul of him ; it is the whiteness of his character ; it is the heart beneath the rough form, which nearly three hundred years ago moved about in the poor house of Ely ; it is the hand which penned the note for poor sick Benson ; it is the eye which glistened so often with sorrowful tears when it saw distress and want ; it is the gratitude, the kindness, the friendship, the desire for social life, which indited

the letter to Downhall ; it is the craving to see and embrace his "Biddy" who was far off in Ireland ; it is the soldier who could find pleasure in hearing that his children are having a good time in the June days under cherry-trees, while he, the father, is on his way to the wars ; it is the philanthropy which instructed Mr. Knyvett not to allow his tenant Brown to "trouble honest poor neighbors ;" it is the warrior sitting in his tent writing to a bereaved father that his son is "a saint in heaven ;" it is Oliver pleading for a poor widow whose husband, on his death-bed, had asked his thought and care ; Oliver, the advocate of justice, mercy and charity ; Oliver asking for a place in the customs for one who had poor parents, and who was an object of pity ; Oliver blazing into anger at the atrocities in Piedmont, melting into tears for the sufferers, sending them aid, arresting his diplomacy with Mazarin, and telling the Pope that if the Duke of Savoy stop not his persecutions, English cannon shall be heard at the Vatican.

This is the man who interests us. It is the sensitive, excitable, scrupulous, sympathetic, affectionate, prayerful man ; just the same on the little farm of St. Ives that he was in Whitehall. We know but little of him, but that little deeply

interests us. It makes us revere and love him. "Magnanimity and mercy," says Richard Garnett, "shine forth with a brightness fully effacing the worst charges against him." "There are but few indeed," says Frederick Harrison, "in whom the family affections nourish a spirit so pure in the midst of distracting public duties to the last hour of an overburdened life. . . . For the thirty-eight years of his married life Cromwell was all that a loving husband and father could be, overflowing with affection even on the battlefield and in the stress of affairs, indulgent, but not weak, considerate, provident, just, counseling, reproving, exhorting, yearning to lead his children to feel his own intense sense of God's presence."

Dean Stanley says that "Oliver Cromwell, when he came to wield the power of Church and State, of universities and of armies alike was tolerant to a degree which his humble followers were incapable of imitating or understanding." Bishop Burnet remarked that the Protector showed his good understanding in nothing more than in seeking out capable and worthy men for all employments, but most particularly for the courts of law which gave a general satisfaction. Thurloe is said to have been offered a place by

Charles II. when the Protectorate was ended, and to have expressed his fears about serving His Majesty as he had served the Protector, for Oliver was "a man who sought men for places, and not places for men."

What Lord Clarendon so well said of Montrose is equally true of Cromwell: "He never declined any enterprise for the difficulty of going through with it;" and Clarendon, the greatest of the old royalist writers, gives qualified praise to Cromwell, when he says that "his wickednesses could not have accomplished his trophies without the assistance of a great spirit, an admirable circumspection and sagacity, and a most magnanimous resolution."

Macaulay, before he was thirty years old, had overcome his royalist prejudices, and no longer wrote, as at the age of seven, that Oliver was "an unjust and wicked man." He became the champion of the Protector in his fifth article in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1828.

Hallam had written of Cromwell as one who "had sucked only the dregs of a besotted fanaticism," while he spoke of Napoleon as "one to whom the stores of reason and philosophy were open." The young reviewer dared to tell the great historian that while Cromwell was inferior

to Bonaparte in invention, he was far superior to him in wisdom; that Cromwell's "fanaticism never confused his perceptions of the public good;" that "never was any ruler so conspicuously born for sovereignty;" that his "mind expanded more rapidly than his fortunes;" that "insignificant as a private citizen, he was a great general, and a still greater prince; that he was a man who left his own character to take care of itself; that no sovereign ever carried to the throne so strong a sympathy with the interest and feelings of his people; and that he went down to his grave in the fullness of power and fame."

Oliver not only left his character to take care of itself, but he seems to have been utterly oblivious as to his literary reputation. Some of his war letters are remarkable for their strength and clearness; but he took no pains to preserve them. His speeches were great speeches, but he could not, after giving them, recall the language which he had used. He was once asked to furnish the Parliament with a copy of a speech; he could not comply with the request. The "thing," a favorite word with him, was what he was concerned with; not oratory or fame.

The religion of the established church, in the opinion of Charles II., was the only religion ex-

cept that of Rome, fit for a gentleman ; the religion of Cromwell was not so much for gentlemen as for sinners ; but while he clung to doctrines which are now regarded as too rigid, and by the majority of Christians as untenable, he constantly illustrated in his life the spirit of his divine Master. But by nearly all writers he has been represented as insincere, and the title by which he is commonly recognized is that of hypocrite. The *Boston Advertiser* of January 21, 1846, touches on this charge in the following statement : “ One point Mr. Carlyle has settled ; it is Cromwell’s sincerity. Not the most bigoted follower of the Clarendon school will repeat the old-fashioned cant about Cromwell’s hypocrisy and falsehood.” This passage may have been written by Edward Everett Hale ; if not by him, then by his distinguished father, the editor of the *Boston Advertiser*. The question of Oliver’s sincerity is undoubtedly settled by the letters, the speeches, and by Carlyle’s elucidations. It should have been settled by the “ State Papers ” of Thurloe long before Carlyle discovered the letters and did his “ job of buck-washing ” on the speeches. Those folios, which had so little value in Walter Scott’s day, prove that Oliver was not “ a man of falsehoods, but a man of truths.”

There are terrible stories told by royalists in connection with the death of King Charles, in order to show that Oliver was a brutal man. One of these, the surgical operation story of Dr. Bates, has been disposed of ; the king's body was not so mutilated. But it is affirmed that at the time of the signing of the death warrant, Oliver smeared Henry Martyn's face with ink, and that he, with others, forced Richard Ingoldsby, he resisting, to put his name to the fatal paper by holding and guiding his hands. The story is based on Ingoldsby's applying for a pardon after the restoration ; but he had not the death warrant to support his statement. The thing in itself is incredible ; but it is proved to be a lie by Bishop Warburton who thus writes : "The original warrant is still extant, and Ingoldsby's name has no such mark of its being wrote in that manner." The ink story we cannot refute ; let it stand, and let royalists get all the comfort they can out of it. We know the sympathy which Cromwell had for Charles I. and his little children, how he wept when he saw them together ; and the account of his going to the room where the king's body lay on the night after the execution may here be given, as a contrast to the above relations. Mr. Gardiner thinks



this touching story credible. Lord Southampton and a friend obtained permission to sit and watch through the night at Whitehall with the dead king. About midnight, a man closely muffled entered the room, approached the coffin, opened the lid, gazed upon the face, and said, "cruel necessity." Southampton was not sure, but he thought the voice was the voice of Cromwell.

In support of the positions taken in this book, and keeping in view its main object, which is the vindication of England's Protector, I now quote from the last *Encyclopædia Britannica*. "Had Cromwell been less of a Christian and more of a Pagan, historians might have accorded to him some of that leniency with which they have spoken of the vices of a Cæsar or a Peter the Great. But the same office which cowardly hands had done for his bones, servility, ignorance and prejudice did for his memory; and during most part of two centuries the name of the greatest man of his own age and one of the noblest of any age, has been associated with all the infamy that belongs to a life-long career of unmitigated hypocrisy and insatiable ambition. Truth, however, at length begins to prevail, and Cromwell's own prophetic hope is attaining fulfillment. 'I know God has been above all ill

reports, and will in his own time vindicate me.' In speaking, says Milton, of a man so great and who has deserved so signally of this Commonwealth, I shall have done nothing if I merely acquit him of having committed any crime, especially since it concerns not only the Commonwealth but myself individually, as one so closely conjoined in the same infamy, to show to all nations and ages, so far as I can, the supreme excellence of his character and his supreme worthiness of all praise." This article closes with these words: "He was a man for all ages to admire, for all Britons to honor in proud remembrance. No royal name, at least since Alfred's, is more worthy of our veneration than that of the Usurper, Oliver Cromwell."

Remarkable is this testimony considering where it stands. Fifty years ago such praise in an English encyclopædia would have been impossible. The writer of it acknowledges the debt to Carlyle, and says that he will enable posterity to know what kind of a man Oliver Cromwell really was.

Carlyle will enable scholars to know his hero, but his book never will be read except by a few; and hence the need of such books as the present one. And here I cannot but remark, that a life

of Oliver which will command general attention, and have a permanent place in literature, will surely be the work of some future writer. It will take many years to do it, but it will be done. Outside of the letters and speeches, Carlyle left vast old fields unexplored. If he read Thurloe, he made but little use of his vast materials. He complains that Thurloe had no useful index, and the absence of allusions to scenes depicted and events related in the "State Papers," indicates that he never carefully went through the book. "Not one of these monstrous old volumes — the Rushworth's, Whitelocke's, Nalson's, Thurloe's" — he says, "has so much as an available index." He calls them "dreary old records." He is in error ; Thurloe's is a wonderfully interesting book ; and the London edition of 1742 has a complete Cromwell index at the end of each volume. Years could be spent in New England libraries alone in collecting materials for a life of Cromwell which would be worthy of an enduring place in literary annals.

Our little task is done. It has been the story of a great hero who was the possessor of all those qualities which fit a man to guide and to govern his fellowmen ; a ruler who sowed seeds which lay dormant for a generation and then

bore good fruit for all coming time ; a Protector who watched with anxious thought and noble courage over England, over the Protestants of Europe and the colonists in America ; a man free from hypocrisy and insincerity, whose character was illumined by all Christian virtues, and who illustrated in his life the principles which he had learned from a divine Master.

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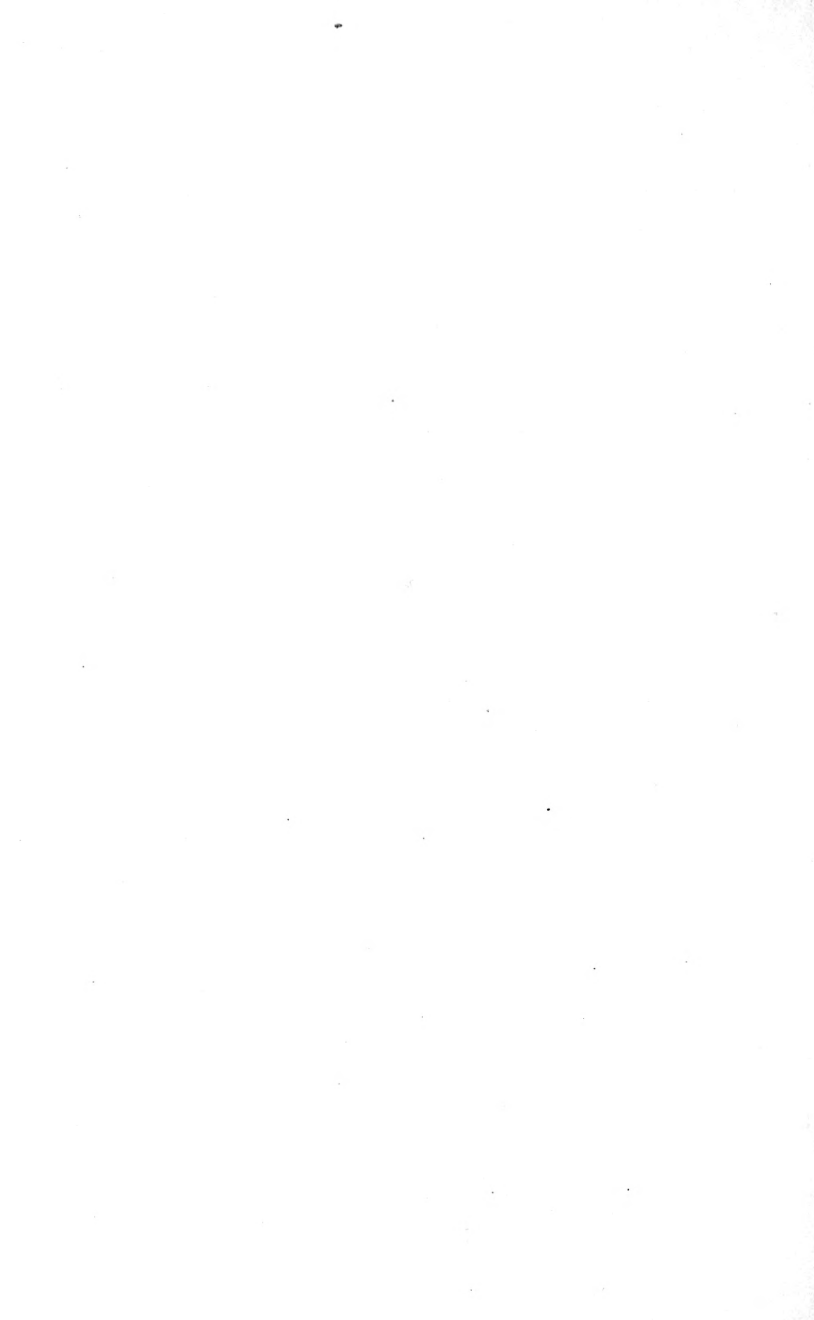
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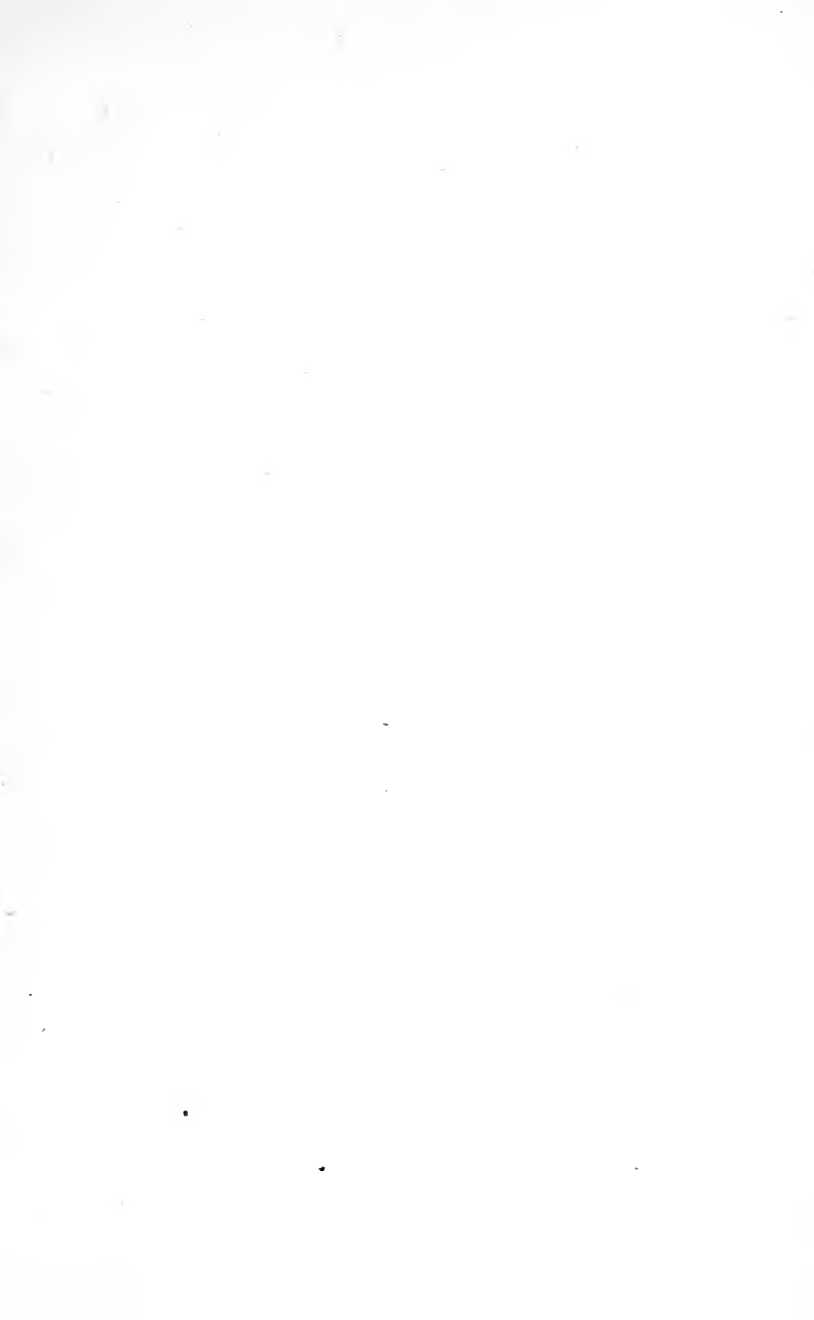
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